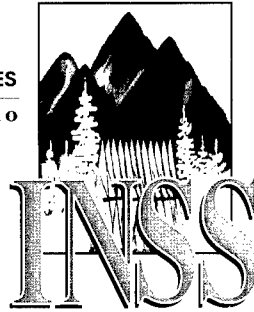


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INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES  
U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado



**Threat Perceptions in the  
Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore**

William E. Berry, Jr.

September 1997

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**THREAT PERCEPTIONS IN  
THE PHILIPPINES, MALAYSIA,  
AND SINGAPORE**

William E. Berry, Jr.

INSS Occasional Paper 16

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## FOREWORD

This comparative case study on threat perceptions in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore provides many interesting insights into the changing nature of Southeast Asian regional security in the post-Cold War era. Differing threat perceptions among these regional actors have important implications for U.S. military presence in the region and for overall U.S. security interests in Asia. One of Dr. Berry's conclusions is that American interests may be better served by encouraging the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum to take a more proactive role in helping to resolve regional security disputes, rather than relying on bilateral Sino-American efforts aimed at the same objective. As a student of Asian politics for many years and the former Air Attaché to Malaysia, Dr. Berry is extremely well qualified to discuss these issues. With this monograph, he becomes the first author who has published two *INSS Occasional Papers*—another clear indication of his outstanding regional expertise, writing ability, and research capabilities.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter L. Hays".

PETER L. HAYS, Lt Colonel, USAF  
Director, Institute for National Security Studies

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research addresses threat perceptions in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore and how or if these perceptions are influenced by the U.S. military presence in East Asia. It encompasses a comparative approach in that each individual interviewed was asked the same basic questions. These questions are:

1. What are the vital national security objectives of each country?
2. What are the major domestic and regional threats which challenge the attainment of the identified national security objectives?
3. What national security strategies has each country developed to protect its interests against the threats to include political, economic, and military components?
4. What is the significance, if any, of the U.S. military presence in East Asia to the threat perceptions and the national security strategies of each country?

I selected these three countries in part because they represent different security relationships with the United States. The U.S. has had a long security tie with the Philippines which in the post-World War II period was based on the presence of U.S. forces at bases in the Philippines and a Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT). The bases no longer house American forces, but the MDT remains in effect. In 1995, the Philippines and China had a confrontation over a disputed island in the South China Sea which has tended to focus the security debate in Manila. Because the Philippine economy is only recently beginning to grow and develop and military expenditures are limited because of competing demands for scarce resources, the Philippines has to depend to a certain extent on regional organizations and its well-established ties to the U.S. to provide for its security.

Malaysia has taken a different approach to its national security by employing a more neutral orientation. Although Malaysia also has

conflicting claims in the South China Sea, it has been very careful in attempting not to antagonize China. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the ASEAN Regional Forum are very important fora which Malaysia hopes will provide for regional security. It also has embarked on a substantial military modernization effort and has increased its military exercise and training program with the United States and other allies. Singapore has been more proactive in developing its security ties with the U.S. than the Philippines and Malaysia. Its national security objectives and threat perceptions are more clearly defined, and Singapore has taken specific steps in the effort to keep the U.S. engaged in the region. Perhaps the best example is the decision in the late 1980s and early 1990s to offer the United States access to some of its facilities as the withdrawal from the Philippine bases approached.

The first section of this paper outlines the nature of the U.S. military presence in East Asia from the Cold War to post-Cold War periods. The second identifies some real and potential security threats in the region from the American perspective. The final section reports the results of a series of more than 50 interviews conducted in Washington and in each of the three countries based on the four basic questions outlined above. Some conclusions are then drawn concerning similarities and differences in national threat perceptions and the importance of the American military presence.

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## *Threat Perceptions in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore: A Comparative Study*

### **Introduction**

This paper presents a comparative analysis of the threat perceptions in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore and how or if these threat perceptions are influenced by the U.S. military presence in East Asia. In addition to the normal literature search and review of policy statements by leaders in each of these countries, the bulk of this research involved a series of interviews with policy analysts, academicians, think tank representatives, and other experts on security matters in Washington D.C. during July 1996 and in Manila, Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore during the first three weeks of September 1996.

In each of the more than fifty interviews conducted, I requested those interviewed to respond to the following set of questions which then serve as my comparative framework of analysis:

- What are the vital national security objectives and interests of each country?
- What are the perceived threats to these vital national security objectives as seen from the perspective of each country?
- Based on the vital interests and threats to them, what national security strategy, to include political, economic, and military components, has each country developed?
- How does the U.S. military presence in East Asia influence the formulation of each country's national security strategy or does it?

The organization of this paper begins with a description of the U.S. military presence in East Asia as this presence has evolved during both the Cold War and post-Cold War periods. The second section identifies some security threats which I thought would be of concern in Southeast Asia prior to actually visiting the region. The third section presents the results of the interviews conducted involving the questions outlined in the comparative framework. The final section draws some conclusions based on the similarities and differences in the threat perceptions of the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore and how each views the importance of the U.S. military presence.

## **The U.S. Military Presence in East Asia**

### **The Cold War**

As the Cold War intensified in 1947-48, the United States extended its containment strategy from Europe to Asia. One of the first manifestations of this focus on Asia was the Military Bases Agreement (MBA) which the United States and the Philippines entered into in 1947. The MBA was an involved document which provided for the retention of U.S. military bases in its former colony and for the addition of other facilities in the future if necessary.<sup>1</sup> The two major facilities were Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base, and the MBA was to remain in effect for 99 years. In August 1951, the U.S. and the Philippines signed a Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) as part of a series of interlocking pacts associated with the Japanese peace treaty process.<sup>2</sup>

Mao Zedong's victory at the conclusion of the Chinese civil war in 1949 and the North Korean invasion of South Korea precipitating the Korean War in June 1950 were major events which influenced American security policy in East Asia. President Truman became concerned that if the U.S.

occupation in Japan weren't ended soon, its continuation could result in deteriorating relations with Japan. This concern was particularly important because U.S. bases in Japan and their logistical support were vital to the successful conclusion of the Korean war. Truman desired a peace treaty with Japan which could then lead to the end of the occupation. He realized, however, that to conclude this treaty with Japan, he would need the support of a number of countries, including the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand.

To secure the support of these three countries for the peace treaty, the United States had to overcome some serious reservations which each country had based on their experiences with Japan before and during World War II. This security problem was resolved by a series of security pacts.<sup>3</sup> The first of these was the 1951 MDT with the Philippines referred to above. The second was a tripartite agreement among the United States, Australia, and New Zealand known as the ANZUS Pact, and the third was the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty which contributed to Japanese security and eased regional concerns by providing for the continued stationing of U.S. military forces in Japan. Shortly after these treaties were signed in September 1951, the peace treaty with Japan was concluded in San Francisco which officially ended World War II.<sup>4</sup> By the end of the Truman administration, the United States had security treaties with Japan, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand which laid the foundation for the American military presence in the region.

The Eisenhower administration continued the alliance building begun by President Truman. In October 1953, the U.S. and Republic of Korea (ROK) signed the Mutual Defense Treaty which committed each side to come to the aid of the other under certain circumstances and provided for the continued stationing of U.S. forces in the ROK.<sup>5</sup> In December 1954, the U.S. negotiated a similar defense treaty with Taiwan.<sup>6</sup> This treaty also

provided for U.S. military forces to be stationed in Taiwan so that the American containment line had been extended to the ROK and Taiwan. Also in 1954, primarily at the urging of the United States, representatives of eight countries met in the Philippines to sign the Manila Pact and create the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO).<sup>7</sup> The Philippines and Thailand were the only East Asian countries to sign the Manila Pact, but SEATO did extend the U.S. commitment to mainland Southeast Asia including Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam. The line of containment was complete: from Japan and South Korea in the north to Australia and New Zealand in the south.

The Vietnam war had even more profound effects on U.S. national security policy than did the Korean war. The Nixon and Carter administrations in particular attempted to reduce the American military presence in Asia. Because of both domestic and international considerations, President Nixon enunciated what became known as the Nixon Doctrine in July 1969. As a result of this policy shift, the United States reduced the number of U.S. military forces in Asia significantly. In Vietnam, the force level dropped from 500,000 in 1969 to less than 3,000 by early 1973. In Korea, the number dropped from 60,000 to 40,000; from 39,000 to 27,000 in Japan; from 48,000 to 43,000 in Okinawa (before its reversion to Japan in 1972); and most of the 16,000 forces in Thailand were removed. Smaller numbers were reassigned from the Philippines and Taiwan during the same period.<sup>8</sup> President Carter attempted to reduce further the number of U.S. forces in Korea during his administration, but he was largely unsuccessful in this effort because of domestic opposition and regional concerns.<sup>9</sup>

Another major Asian initiative during the Carter presidency was the effort to normalize diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC). This initiative was eventually successful, but the major impediments were the U.S. diplomatic and security relationships with Taiwan. The United



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States had acknowledged in the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué that Taiwan was part of China. However, the PRC was not satisfied with this acknowledgment and insisted that the U.S. meet three preconditions before diplomatic relations could be established: abrogate the Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan in place since 1954, sever diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and withdraw the remaining U.S. military forces from the island.<sup>10</sup>

These demands presented serious problems for the Carter administration. Not only did the President feel a moral obligation for Taiwan's security, but he also feared that breaking diplomatic relations and abrogating the security treaty would send the wrong signals concerning America's commitment to meet its obligations, particularly since the collapse of American supported governments in Indochina during 1973 and his own troop withdrawal plan for Korea. Additionally, Carter understood that he would face opposition from many members of Congress and the population at large over this issue.

Nevertheless, geopolitical and geostrategic considerations prevailed, and on 15 December 1978, the U.S. and China issued a joint communiqué announcing the formal normalization of diplomatic relations which went into effect on 1 January 1979. Although President Carter, in an accompanying message, stated he hoped there would be a "peaceful resolution" of the Taiwan problem, there was no such provision in the communiqué itself. In fact, the Chinese issued a statement which clearly indicated that the reunification of China was "entirely China's internal affair," a position China continues to maintain at present.<sup>11</sup> Congress responded by passing the Taiwan Relations Act, which President Carter signed on 10 April 1979.<sup>12</sup> This act authorized the continuation of commercial, cultural, and other relations between the U.S. and Taiwan and also stipulated that the U.S. expected the "future of Taiwan would be determined by peaceful means." To assist in this peaceful transition, the United States pledged to provide

defensive weapons “in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self defense capability.”

The Reagan administration, dismayed by the perception of vacillation in Carter’s policies, was determined to re-establish the containment strategy in Asia as Soviet military power increased.<sup>13</sup> To meet this Soviet challenge, the new administration devised a three-part strategy which included retaining U.S. forward deployed military forces in allied Asian countries, strengthening bilateral and multilateral security relations, and providing security assistance programs to friends and allies so that they could contribute more effectively to regional stability.<sup>14</sup> Regarding Korea, President Reagan visited Seoul in November 1983 and traveled to the Joint Security Area at Panmunjom on the 38th parallel. He emphasized that U.S. ground forces would remain and declared Northeast Asia to be a region of critical strategic significance.<sup>15</sup>

In the case of the Philippines, the Reagan administration expressed unequivocal support for the retention of the U.S. military bases there to thwart Soviet expansion in Southeast Asia. The administration extended an invitation to Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos to visit the U.S., and during this visit in September 1982, President Reagan once again stressed the importance of the U.S.-Philippine security relationship and the value of Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base.<sup>16</sup> Less than four years later, however, the “people’s power revolution” would overthrow Marcos and signal the beginning of the end for the U.S. bases in the Philippines.

## **The Post-Cold War**

With the end of the Cold War and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, the Bush administration began to reevaluate its military strategy and force levels in East Asia. In 1990, the Pentagon published *A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Looking*

*Toward the 21st Century.*<sup>17</sup> This document attempted to define U.S. objectives in Asia and the force structure required to achieve these objectives. The section on the Korean peninsula is instructive for the overall tenor of this document and the administration's thinking in the early 1990s. It described the border between the two Koreas "as one of the world's potential flashpoints" and established three bilateral security objectives. The first was to deter North Korean aggression or defeat this aggression if deterrence failed. Second, to reduce political and military tensions on the peninsula and to encourage the initiation of confidence building measures. Third, to begin the transition of U.S. forces in Korea from a leading to a supporting role.<sup>18</sup>

As part of this important transition, the Pentagon envisioned a three-phased restructuring of American forces on the Peninsula. In the first phase, estimated to take between one and three years, the United States pledged to reduce its forces by approximately 7,000 personnel—2,000 from the Air Force and 5,000 support troops from the Army.<sup>19</sup> These reductions would bring the force structure on the Korean peninsula into line with the 1989 Nunn-Warner Resolution which outlined what U.S. force strength should be at the end of the Cold War. In phase two, between three to five years, the two allies would re-examine the threat and consider reducing the force structure of the 2nd Infantry Division, the one remaining U.S. Army division in the ROK. In the third phase, between five and ten years, the ROK and United States would consult with each other based on the progress made during the first two phases. As the Koreans assumed the lead role in their own defense, this document predicted that fewer Americans would be required.

By November 1991, events in North Korea forced the U.S. and ROK to reevaluate the phased reduction schedule just outlined. Secretary of Defense Cheney, during a visit to Seoul, announced that the U.S. would suspend its force reductions "until the dangers and uncertainties of the North Korean nuclear program have been thoroughly addressed."<sup>20</sup> Cheney's

statement on suspending further force reductions was important because the U.S. Air Force already had begun to remove its personnel and equipment from three air bases. The two sides had agreed to redesignate those facilities as collocated operating bases, which meant that the USAF would have access to them in a crisis, but there would be no peacetime presence.<sup>21</sup> Cheney and his Korean counterpart also reached an agreement on burden sharing through 1995. South Korea pledged to increase its support for U.S. forces from approximately \$150 million in 1991 to \$180 million in 1992. This support would gradually increase to roughly \$280 million by 1995.<sup>22</sup>

This brief review of the efforts to alter somewhat the security relationship with South Korea is instructive because it identifies some of the contradictions which have characterized the post-Cold War security environment in Asia from the American perspective. Demands in the United States for reduced military spending so that Americans could enjoy the peace dividend have conflicted with uncertainties which remain in Asia. In this case, the suspected North Korean nuclear weapons program caused the Bush administration to reevaluate its troop reduction plans. Similar contradictions confront the Clinton administration, as will become evident in the next section of this paper. But first it is important to discuss a significant change which occurred in the Philippines during the early 1990s which has influenced the U.S. military presence in the region.

By late 1990, the United States and the Philippines had reached a partial impasse in their efforts to negotiate an extension to the MBA.<sup>23</sup> U.S. negotiators were dissatisfied with the monetary demands their Philippine counterparts were making, and the Philippines remained caught on the horns of a dilemma: between nationalist calls for the termination of the bases, and the economic gains to which the bases contributed—particularly those localities immediately surrounding Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base.<sup>24</sup> In June 1991, however, nature intervened when Mt. Pinatubo, an

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inert volcano for hundreds of years, erupted and literally destroyed Clark Air Base. By November 1991, the United States returned this base to Philippine control.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the natural disaster affecting Clark Air Base, negotiators from the two countries reached an agreement in July 1991 to extend the MBA for 10 years to cover Subic Bay Naval Base.<sup>26</sup> However, when the Philippine Senate considered the proposed treaty for ratification in September, 12 of the 23 senators voted against it which in effect signaled the end of the American presence at Subic.<sup>27</sup> Almost exactly one year later, on 1 October 1992, the U.S. Navy withdrew the last of its forces from the naval base, ending the U.S. permanent military presence in the Philippines which had been in place since 1902 (with the exception of the Japanese occupation during World War II).<sup>28</sup> Although the military bases reverted to Philippine control, the MDT between the two countries remains in effect.

Concerned by the problems it encountered during the negotiations with the Philippines, the United States began discussions with Singapore in late 1990 for the purpose of increasing the access of U.S. air and naval forces to facilities there. In November 1990 the two sides signed a memorandum of agreement which allows the U.S. to maintain a modest military presence in Singapore—fewer than 200 people on a permanent basis. These forces provide logistical and maintenance support for the Seventh Fleet and plan for the training exercises of USAF units, mainly from bases in Alaska and Japan but temporarily assigned in Singapore.<sup>29</sup> This security relationship will be discussed in more detail later in this paper.

The Clinton administration has attempted to shore up U.S. credibility in the Asian region through a number of policy pronouncements and other actions. The *Bottom Up Review* emphasized the importance of forward based forces in Asia and elsewhere.<sup>30</sup> In February 1995, the Department of Defense published the *United States Strategy for the East*

*Asia-Pacific Region*, a comprehensive summary of American security interests in the region. In this document, the Pentagon made it clear that U.S. military force levels in the region would remain at approximately 100,000 for the foreseeable future, and there would be no more drawdowns from South Korea as long as the threat from North Korea remained.<sup>31</sup> The 100,000 troops forward deployed include approximately 45,000 in Japan, 37,000 in Korea, and the remainder scattered among Singapore, Guam, Hawaii, and Alaska. Although establishing a specific force level remains somewhat controversial in the U.S., the administration sees this action as a sign of its commitment to stay involved in East Asia even though significant changes have occurred since the Cold War era.<sup>32</sup>

This review of the U.S. military presence in Asia during and after the Cold War is significant because it sets forth the long-term U.S. commitment to the security of the region under both Republican and Democratic administrations. Obviously, the Clinton administration intends to continue this commitment. However, there is an active debate in the United States as to whether or not this is a wise policy choice based on domestic demands for scarce resources and the changed international environment. Several friendly and allied countries in Asia also are concerned about the long-term U.S. commitment to the region, and these concerns are important factors as they attempt to formulate their national security interests and the potential threats which may challenge those interests.

In order to better appreciate the threat perception of the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore, it is necessary to understand some of the most significant potential conflicts and security problems that could directly affect these countries. This next section will briefly identify some of those potential conflicts and problems. It is important to observe that what follows is an American perspective and will serve as a comparison with the actual threat perceptions of the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore.

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## **Potential Southeast Asian Security Problems**

### **South China Sea Territorial Claims**

The Spratly Islands in the South China Sea are arguably the most dangerous area in Southeast Asia and pose a serious threat to regional peace. China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei have conflicting territorial claims to the Spratlys. Potential oil and natural gas deposits, rich fishing grounds, and their geographical position astride some of the most important sealanes of communication contribute to the value of these small islands and atolls. In addition, as several countries have established expanded economic zones in recent years, these zones overlap, which exacerbate some of these territorial disputes.<sup>33</sup> In 1988, China and Vietnam fought several naval engagements in the Spratlys as each attempted to substantiate its claims through military force.

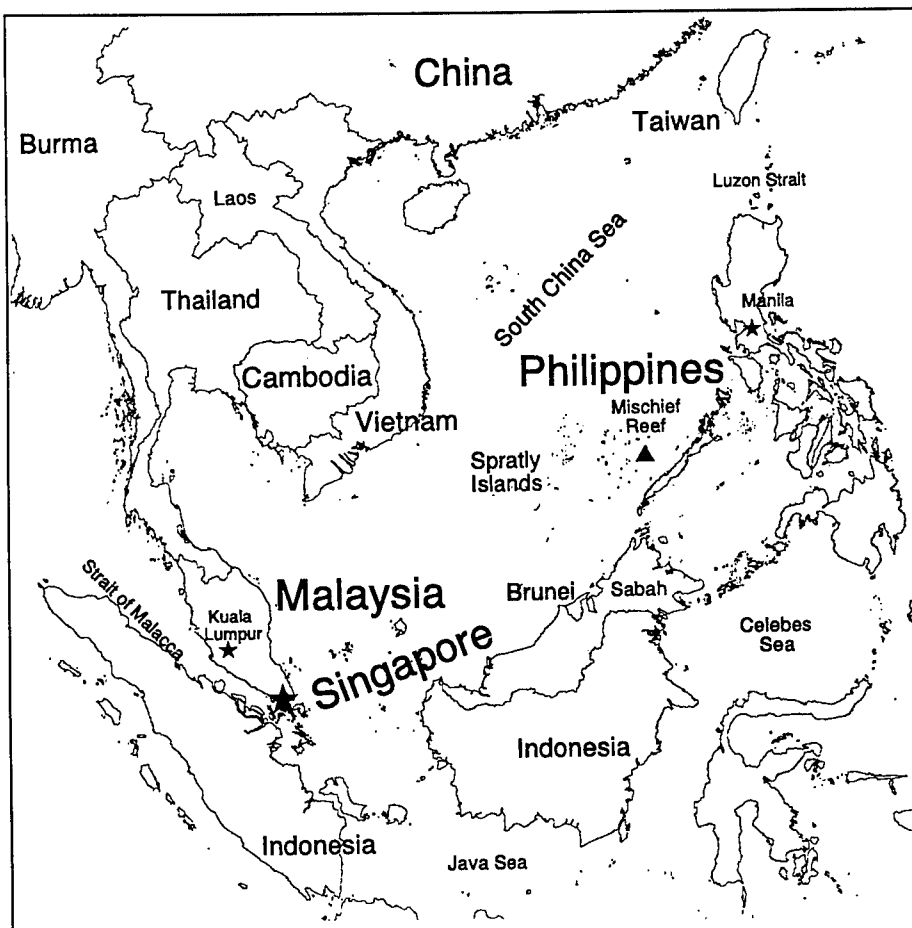
In February 1992, China's National People's Congress passed the Law on Territorial Waters and their Contiguous Areas, declaring that the Spratlys are part of its territorial sea and authorizing the use of armed force to settle conflicting claims. In July of the same year, the ASEAN (Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Brunei, and, since 1995, Vietnam) foreign ministers in their annual meeting issued the ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea which urged restraint on all the parties. This declaration calls upon all the claimants to pledge not to use force to settle their territorial disputes and to work toward the economic development of the South China Sea while issues over sovereignty are negotiated. Although the foreign ministers did not single out China, it was clear that they were concerned over the earlier Chinese legislation and China's threat to use force.<sup>34</sup>

These concerns increased in 1995 and 1996 when China directly challenged the Philippines on and near Mischief Reef which both countries claim. The Chinese began construction of what appeared to be a guard post, and Chinese soldiers were observed on the platform. Since Mischief Reef is only 135 miles from the Philippine island of Palawan, Philippine authorities expressed their displeasure and called on China to withdraw.<sup>35</sup> If China were looking for a test case to determine what response to expect from other claimants, Mischief Reef probably was a good choice because the Philippine military is so weak. Since the U.S. withdrawal from its bases in the Philippines earlier in the decade, the Philippines does not have the military forces to defend its territorial claims. Even though the Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States remains in effect, this weakness was a sobering realization for Philippine political and military authorities. It may be that China saw this challenge to the Philippines as a means to probe what the ASEAN and U.S. responses would be. This represented the first direct Chinese territorial challenge to an ASEAN member in the Spratlys.<sup>36</sup>

The well-established U.S. position on conflicting claims in the South China Sea is that disputes should be settled peacefully without the threat or use of military force. It takes no position on the merits of the respective claims, but is willing to use its good offices to help resolve any differences.<sup>37</sup> However, after the problem between China and the Philippines developed, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Joseph Nye stated that if any conflict in the South China Sea interfered with freedom of the seas, then the United States Seventh Fleet was prepared to provide escort services so that freedom of navigation could be protected.<sup>38</sup> Although Nye did not mention China by name, it is apparent that he was referring to the recent problem with the Philippines and signaling the Chinese to refrain from future actions which could disrupt navigation through these critical waterways.



### The South China Sea: Disputed Regions



*Map by D. Partillo and J. Larsen*

### China and Taiwan

Another major territorial dispute which could affect Southeast Asia directly or indirectly is that between China and Taiwan. This dispute once again took on crisis proportions in the weeks and months leading up to Taiwan's first direct presidential election in March 1996. Prior to this election, China attempted to intimidate Taiwan's government and people by

conducting a series of military maneuvers and exercises in close proximity to Taiwan.<sup>39</sup> These maneuvers and exercises included live artillery fire off the southwest and northeast coasts of Taiwan, near heavy shipping lanes, and the massing of sizable military forces on the mainland across from Taiwan. The Chinese leadership apparently hoped that these actions would help defeat Taiwanese candidates who were espousing increased independence for Taiwan in the international community. In December 1995, China realized some success in using similar intimidation to influence the voting for Taiwan's parliament.<sup>40</sup> However, this tactic did not work with the presidential election. Lee Teng-hui, the incumbent, won 54% of the vote, and the second-place candidate who supported Taiwan's independence, received 21% of the vote. More than 76% of the eligible voters turned out to cast their ballots.<sup>41</sup>

As previously referenced, the U.S. position on China and Taiwan since the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué has been that there is only one China, and Taiwan is part of China. However, the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act calls on China and Taiwan to resolve their differences by peaceful means and pledges the United States to assist with Taiwan's defense by providing military equipment to replace older systems. During the most recent crisis, the U.S. exercised influence both diplomatically and through the deployment of aircraft carrier battle groups to the region. Diplomatically, the U.S. practiced the policy of "strategic ambiguity" in that American policy makers did not state specifically what the U.S. response would be if China took more direct action against Taiwan.<sup>42</sup> Nonetheless, this policy did allow the U.S. to be an effective force for moderation concerning both China and Taiwan, and tensions have abated somewhat in the period after the March election. The deployment of military forces in the form of two aircraft carriers also was an important foreign-policy tool contributing to this outcome. If the United States had not used its military forces as it did, it is quite possible that the

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most recent crises could have become worse and may have resulted in conflict between China and Taiwan. There was no other country capable of influencing both of these governments as the U.S. did.

### **Sealanes of Communications and a Possible Superpower Vacuum**

There are other potential conflicts in East Asia in addition to the Spratlys and the China-Taiwan dispute. Kent Calder, in a recent article in *Foreign Affairs*, wrote that several countries in the region are in the process of becoming more dependent on Middle East sources of oil.<sup>43</sup> These countries include China, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea. Calder argued that the greatest long-term security threat is a possible naval arms race involving China, Japan, and possibly South Korea as these countries try to protect their sealanes of communications (SLOCs) which will become even more important to their economic growth and development as their dependence on Middle East oil increases.<sup>44</sup> U.S. military forces, particularly the Seventh Fleet, serve as a stabilizing influence to reduce the possibility of such an arms race since the United States is clearly on record as supporting freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and elsewhere.

Related to this stabilizing influence exercised by the United States is the concern among several Asian states that the U.S. might reduce this presence because of domestic and other pressures. If this were to occur, some fear that a power vacuum would develop which regional powers might try to fill. There has not developed in Asia a security relationship comparable to NATO in Europe. Because of this, the U.S. security presence as evidenced by the security treaties, agreements, and forward-deployed military forces has been the cornerstone of Asian security in the post World War II era. Even though the Cold War is now over, there are still real and potential conflicts in the region. If the U.S. withdraws or reduces its military forces it is likely that China, Japan, or perhaps a unified Korea might attempt to fill the vacuum

created.<sup>45</sup> The concerns expressed in the early 1950s by several Asian countries about the possible Japanese threat are still alive and well. The security relationship with the United States remains important in convincing the Japanese that increased military expansion in the region is not only unnecessary but would be counterproductive to larger foreign policy goals. This relationship also attenuated fears within the region concerning Japanese intentions.

The United States is viewed by many countries in East Asia as an “honest broker” and very valuable in providing assurances that possible antagonists will not engage in military aggression as long as the American presence remains viable. U.S. military forces are a tangible example of the American commitment to remain engaged. Without this presence, the possibility exists that conflict could occur.<sup>46</sup> Although several Asian leaders are reticent to express their public support for the continuation of the U.S. military presence because of concern that such comments might offend China, there is a general consensus that maintaining the status quo, including U.S. forces, is in their best interests. Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord revealed these sentiments in an interview after the recent China-Taiwan dispute. He related that most Asian countries had expressed support for the deployment of the U.S. carriers to limit the possibility of escalation, but these countries had made their expressions of support privately because they did not want to encourage a confrontation with China.<sup>47</sup>

## **Cambodia**

Even though the United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia (UNTAC) achieved a fair amount of success in reducing the violence in Cambodia and providing for the 1994 elections, Cambodia remains a potential flashpoint in Southeast Asia. The Khmer Rouge continues to be a challenge to the central government, which is itself riven by

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differences between the First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh and Second Prime Minister Hun Sen. Although those titles suggest that Ranariddh is the more powerful, in fact Hun Sen is the dominant figure in the current government and has made no secret of his disdain for his colleague.<sup>48</sup> These differences became more pronounced in mid 1996 when Ieng Sary, the former Khmer Rouge Foreign Minister, split from Pol Pot and defected to the Cambodian government. Hun Sen was willing to accept Ieng Sary and his followers, whereas Ranariddh initially opposed any effort to grant asylum since Ieng Sary had been tried in absentia for genocide and given a death penalty. Although Ranariddh later acquiesced on his opposition to allowing Ieng Sary asylum, this episode provides another example of the personal and policy differences in the Cambodian government.<sup>49</sup>

While this defection suggests serious divisions within the Khmer Rouge, the hard-line supporters of Pol Pot still remain a challenge to the government, particularly in those areas of western Cambodia where the insurgency is still powerful. To complicate matters, both Vietnam and Thailand have long histories of involvement in Cambodia's internal affairs which could lead to problems within ASEAN and possibly to a broader conflict once again involving hapless Cambodia.<sup>50</sup>

### **Nuclear Proliferation**

The possibility of nuclear proliferation in East Asia is another significant concern throughout the region. North Korea represents a major challenge to efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. In March 1993 North Korea announced that it intended to withdraw from the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) which it had signed in 1985.<sup>51</sup> Through a series of negotiations lasting until October 1994, the United States and other concerned countries finally convinced Pyongyang to remain in the NPT and to allow inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency. These

actions have defused this threat somewhat. Nonetheless, the potential of North Korea—or even a unified Korea—to develop nuclear weapons could cause a reconsideration of Japan's nuclear policies.

Japan has long adhered to what are commonly referred to as its three non-nuclear principles. These principles are that Japan will not produce nuclear weapons, import them from other sources, or allow them to be stationed on Japanese soil. Anti-nuclear sentiments remain very strong in Japan, and it is unlikely that the Japanese people and government would seriously countenance revising these non-nuclear principles unless a major change occurred in Japan's national security orientation.<sup>52</sup> A change in the U.S. security relationship, which currently provides for the stationing of approximately 47,000 American military personnel in Japan, or the elimination of the U.S. nuclear umbrella over Japan could also cause a Japanese re-evaluation as could developments in Korea, China, and possibly even Russia. The American security presence reduces the likelihood that this type of nuclear proliferation will occur in the foreseeable future.

### **The Rise of a Regional Hegemonic Power**

Based on the previous discussion involving conflicts in the South China Sea, the ongoing contentious relationships between China and Taiwan, and the potential vacuum created if and when the United States reduces its presence in East Asia, China is a possible future hegemonic power in the region (at least from the American perspective). The U.S.-China relationship has deteriorated over the past few years as differences over trade, human rights, missile sales to the Middle East and South Asia, nuclear testing, and defense spending have caused concern in the United States. Uneasiness over Taiwan and the Spratlys only adds to the bilateral problems. As communism has lost its luster for many Chinese, the political leadership has focused more on traditional Chinese nationalism as a substitute to motivate the people and

to serve as a source of legitimacy for the government, particularly during the succession process from Deng Xiaoping to Jiang Zemin.<sup>53</sup>

There is no question that China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) is embarked upon a major modernization program. However, questions do remain concerning the motives for this modernization and what will be the likely effects on the region.<sup>54</sup> China's dynamic economy has permitted the purchase of modern equipment, a process also encouraged by the willingness of countries such as Russia to sell such equipment. The changing security environment in East Asia also is a factor influencing China's decision to modernize its armed forces as its leaders see both challenges and opportunities.<sup>55</sup> One other problem which makes it difficult to determine how much China is actually spending on defense is the fact that the PLA is partially self supporting through its many business and other non-military activities. As an example, one expert estimated that in 1992 the PLA made more than \$5 billion from its various enterprises, an amount equal to 80% of the official Chinese defense budget.<sup>56</sup>

This brief analysis of China's defense modernization is not meant to be alarmist, although several countries in East Asia are concerned about what these increased capabilities mean for regional security. The recent incidents in the South China Sea involving the Philippines and the tension with Taiwan have only heightened these concerns. The U.S. relationship with Taiwan is very complex, with both sides making their fair share of mistakes in attempting to understand the policies of the other. Defense Secretary Perry voiced some of these frustrations in a 1996 speech at the National Defense University in Washington. He indicated that U.S. policy toward China remains "constructive engagement" and admitted that efforts to contain China would likely fail. He also pointed out that it takes two to engage and criticized China's actions toward Taiwan.<sup>57</sup> However, if the recent events involving Taiwan serve as an example, China does understand well the role

of military force in the foreign policy process. The presence of U.S. forces provides a tangible example of American commitment to the region and acts as a constraint on possible Chinese actions which could threaten the interests of the U.S. and others.

## **The Philippines**

### **Vital National Security Objectives and Interests**

Several Philippine respondents identified national sovereignty and territorial integrity as being vital national security interests, but most of these individuals were reticent to be specific whether they considered the islands claimed by the Philippines in the Spratlys to be vital to national security. One military academic made it very clear that in his opinion, the Philippines does not have sufficient military capabilities to defend Mischief Reef and the other islands claimed by the Philippines if China is determined to make a concerted effort to take these islands.<sup>58</sup>

There was significant unanimity among the respondents that the growth and development of the Philippine economy is definitely a vital national security objective. President Fidel Ramos has established *Philippines 2000* as a program of economic reforms which the Philippines must implement if the country is to continue its recent economic progress. In 1994 and 1995, the economy grew by 4.4% and 4.8% respectively which was a marked improvement over earlier years. Projections are that the gross domestic product (GDP) will increase between 5.5% and 6.5% in 1996.<sup>59</sup> As long as the economy continues to progress and political stability is achieved, local and foreign investment will serve as a stimulus for economic growth and development. Over the next 7-10 years, regional peace remains imperative so that the Philippines can continue to allocate scarce resources to the economy. As an American diplomat with a long history in the region pointed out, the



Philippines' first priority is the economy; if the recently established progress continues, then it may be possible to increase defense spending later provided that future leaders deem this the proper course.<sup>60</sup> This emphasis on the economy as a national security objective was repeated by almost every one of the Filipinos interviewed.

### **Threat Perceptions**

The Philippines has been plagued by domestic insurgencies for many years, and in the opinion of most experts this continues to be a primary threat. The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its military arm, the New People's Army (NPA) still present a problem for the government, but factions within the CPP and significant defections, in part because of government efforts, have reduced both the CPP and NPA. In addition, improving economic performance has reduced the appeal of these groups among the people. The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and Abu Sayyaf are all Islamic groups which have been trying to gain some sort of autonomy for the Moslem population on Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago. In early September 1996 the MNLF and the government reached an agreement which will allow increased MNLF participation in the political process of four provinces in Mindanao. However, the other two groups remain outside this agreement, and considerable speculation remains as to how effective the implementation of this agreement will be even among MNLF members.<sup>61</sup>

Smuggling, terrorism, and piracy were also identified as national security threats by some Filipinos, although there was no consistency in their responses. One former military officer stated that the United States needed to provide more intelligence data to the Philippines so that his country would be better able to confront these threats.<sup>62</sup> A foreign policy practitioner pointed out that many Filipinos have difficulty differentiating terrorism from normal

criminal activity. This was the case when Ramzi Yousuf was arrested in Manila and subsequently convicted in U.S. courts for plotting to blow up several U.S. airliners in the Pacific area.<sup>63</sup>

The South China Sea is perceived as a major national security issue in the Philippines. Prior to the Mischief Reef incident beginning in February 1995, Philippine political leaders generally presented a somewhat relaxed view of China's intentions. For example, Foreign Minister Roberto Romulo declared in 1993 that China did not exhibit any hegemonic tendencies and its military buildup was just part of the larger modernization process.<sup>64</sup> President Ramos made similar comments, also in late 1993, when he stated that a country as big and powerful as China is entitled to have a highly efficient military.<sup>65</sup> This perspective began to change by early 1995. The *Manila Chronicle* warned in a January editorial that the Philippine military was in very bad shape and that the Chinese military buildup should be very much of a concern.<sup>66</sup>

President Ramos changed his tone after the Chinese began to build structures on Mischief Reef. He related that the Philippine government had sent a "very firm" aide memoire to the Chinese Embassy in Manila protesting the Chinese action. He also pointed out that the 1992 ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea required all claimants to South China Sea territories to resolve differences through negotiations. In this manner, Ramos indicated that the current problem was not just a bilateral issue between the Philippines and China, but a multilateral problem involving all those countries which had signed the ASEAN Declaration.<sup>67</sup> Later in February, President Ramos, during a speech at the Philippine Military Academy, warned that the Philippines would use force if necessary "to oust any foreign force from Philippine territory." Reportedly, the Philippine Air Force deployed all five of its F-5 fighters to one of its islands in the Spratlys at this time as a signal of Philippine intentions.<sup>68</sup> By October 1995, the Philippine President had

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moderated his approach to a certain extent. He indicated that the Philippines wanted to contribute to "keeping China constructively engaged as a regional partner instead of isolating it as an opponent." At this same time, he also expressed his satisfaction with the support he and the Philippines had received from its ASEAN partners and the United States during the crisis.<sup>69</sup>

This ambivalence on how best to respond to China was evident in the series of interviews conducted in September 1996. No one interviewed would identify China as a specific threat to Philippine national security interests. A military officer indicated the Spratly Islands as a potential "flashpoint" to which the Philippines should pay attention, but he did not specifically mention China as a threat. In this same interview he referenced the U.S. response to the crisis between China and Taiwan. He thought this response was appropriate, but he also was concerned that the Philippines could be drawn in because the USS Independence paid a port call in Manila before deploying to the waters off Taiwan. A staff researcher in the Department of Foreign Affairs took the same position.<sup>70</sup> This ambivalence can be explained in part because the Philippine government and military leaders recognize that their country is not strong enough to confront China in the Spratlys. To identify China as a threat to Philippine national security would not be credible and could prove counterproductive to larger national security strategies. The general sentiment appears to be that military conflict in the Spratlys or elsewhere in the region needs to be avoided if at all possible for the Philippines to have the 7-10 years it needs for continued economic growth and development.

### **National Security Strategies**

Within the domestic context, the economy will continue to receive major attention and allocation of resources. As stated previously, an improved economy is effective in countering the insurgencies which remain a

major source of concern despite the progress which has been made to resolve them. If the economy continues to develop, then it may be possible for the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to begin an effective modernization program. The Philippine Congress passed a major AFP modernization bill in February 1995 coincident with the beginning of the Mischief Reef crisis. The AFP then submitted a modernization program which requested between \$12-\$13 billion over a 15-year period.<sup>71</sup> However, because the AFP has not been able or willing to identify specific threats, the Senate Finance Committee, during the appropriation process, cut the AFP's request in half to approximately \$6-\$7 billion.<sup>72</sup>

There is no question that the AFP badly needs to modernize its equipment. During the period of time when the U.S. maintained its military forces at Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base, the Philippines was content to allow this presence to serve as a major deterrent to an external threat while the AFP concentrated on counterinsurgency warfare. Now the U.S. forces are gone, and Philippine authorities are confronted with the reality that their Air Force and Navy are in very poor shape—at a time when these forces are changing their emphasis from counterinsurgency to conventional defense to protect expanded economic zones (EEZs). In 1995, Philippines defense expenditures represented only 1.5% of GDP, the lowest percentage in ASEAN.<sup>73</sup> The AFP has identified multi-role fighters, air defense radars, long-range patrol aircraft, search and rescue helicopters, and off-shore patrol vessels as some of the weapon systems it would like to acquire, but how much of this equipment it will actually get depends to a large extent on the amount of money Congress appropriates.<sup>74</sup> In short, the Philippines is limited in its national security strategy as to how much of this strategy can be provided by unilateral actions.

The regional component to Philippine national security strategy is much more important than is the domestic component. The Association of

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Southeast Asian Nations and more specifically the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) are central to Philippine security interests. The ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) and the growth triangles encouraging economic growth and development, particularly in Mindanao, complement other Philippine initiatives to grow and develop the economy. The ARF consists of the seven ASEAN countries, ASEAN's dialogue partners (Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and the U.S) and invited guests (Russia, China, Laos and Papua New Guinea) Cambodia became an ARF member in 1995 with Burma and India joining in 1996.<sup>75</sup> ASEAN formed the ARF in 1993 and has held annual meetings since then. The ARF addresses security issues on two levels, Track I and Track II. Track I involves official governmental meetings such as the annual ARF meeting and the ARF Senior Officials Meeting which usually precedes the annual convocation. Track II includes non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as academic institutions and think tanks—primarily but not exclusively from the ASEAN countries. A major advantage of the Track II approach is that participants can sometimes be more flexible and innovative than their government counterparts in making policy recommendations. The annual ARF meetings are high-level opportunities to discuss regional issues. For example, at the 1996 meeting in Indonesia, Secretary of State Warren Christopher led the U.S. delegation.

Some officials in the United States are skeptical concerning ARF's effectiveness in resolving difficult security issues, and have questioned the consensus decision-making process employed. Others are more optimistic in that the ARF is a young organization and has made progress in each of the three annual meetings.<sup>76</sup> The 1996 meeting is instructive in supporting the latter opinion. Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas hosted this meeting and outlined the ARF's evolutionary problem-solving approach: first addressing confidence building measures, then turning to the development of

preventive diplomacy, and finally focusing on conflict resolution.<sup>77</sup> The ARF also has established a series of inter-sessional meetings to address such topics as confidence building, peacekeeping operations, search and rescue operations, and disaster relief. Of particular significance, given the Mischief Reef confrontation, China and the Philippines will co-host the 1997 inter-sessional meeting on confidence building measures.<sup>78</sup>

Another significant outcome of the 1996 ARF meeting was that China, at the insistence of the ASEAN countries, agreed to discuss the Spratly Islands. There was a brief discussion on this topic at the 1995 meeting, but the deliberations in 1996 were more substantive. In the past, Chinese officials have preferred to discuss disputes on a bilateral basis because they were concerned that the ARF could turn into an anti-China organization.<sup>79</sup> At the meeting in Indonesia, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen referenced China's May 1996 ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea and stated that his country was ready "to shelve the disputes while going in for joint development." He also expressed his appreciation of the ARF's decision to allow the Philippines and China to co-host the inter-sessional on confidence building measures.<sup>80</sup> The important point to make with this brief review of the ARF process is that for countries such as the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore, this forum is considered very valuable as part of their national security strategies.<sup>81</sup>

In the case of the Philippines, the ARF process provides a means by which it can raise the Mischief Reef issue in a multilateral setting and attempt to engage the Chinese in discussions. This "strength in numbers" perspective is attractive to the Philippines because it clearly does not have the military capabilities to take on the Chinese unilaterally.<sup>82</sup> Without exception, every Philippine official interviewed expressed confidence and optimism that the ARF process is and would continue to be a very important component of the Philippine national security strategy—which they refer to as comprehensive

security. The Philippines' co-hosting of the inter-sessional on confidence building is viewed as an important opportunity to improve the bilateral relationship and perhaps build institutional ties that can address other related issues in the future. The Philippines has also agreed to publish a defense white paper for the first time as part of its support for confidence building.<sup>83</sup>

### **The U.S. Military Presence**

The United States and the Philippines have a long security relationship which for most of the post World War II period was anchored by the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) and the presence of the two major U.S. military bases at Clark and Subic. Since 1992, the American bases are gone, but the MDT remains in effect. Articles IV and V form the heart of the treaty.<sup>84</sup>

Article IV. Each party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific Area on either of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common dangers in accordance with its constitutional processes ...

Article V: For the purpose of Article IV, an armed attack on either of the Parties is deemed to include an armed attack on the metropolitan territory of either of the Parties, or on the island territories under its jurisdiction in the Pacific or on its armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the Pacific.

In 1979 Secretary of State Vance, in a letter to Foreign Minister Romulo during negotiations over the military bases, defined the "metropolitan territory of the Philippines" to include all of the land areas and adjacent waters which were ceded to the United States by Spain in the Treaty of Paris in 1899 and the Treaty of Washington in 1900. The Secretary repeated the provisions of Article V that an attack on the armed forces, public vessels, or aircraft of either country in the Pacific would serve as a *casas foederis* for the implementation of the treaty.<sup>85</sup> The Vance letter caused some concern in the U.S. Congress among those who thought the Secretary may have extended the

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American commitment beyond the provisions of the MDT. However, a Department of State official responded to the Congress that this was not the case and stated specifically that Vance's letter "in no way represents an expansion of the commitment in the Treaty which has been in effect since 1951."<sup>86</sup>

There have long been questions among Philippine officials as to whether the MDT would apply to Philippine claims in the Spratlys. The official U.S. position is that the United States doesn't take sides on questions related to the merits of the respective claims but is willing to assist with negotiations to resolve differences. U.S. officials in both Washington and Manila made the point that there is a certain "strategic ambiguity" associated with the American position on the MDT and the Spratlys which actually can be an effective deterrent protecting Philippine interests. In effect, these officials said, Filipinos should just accept this "strategic ambiguity" and not ask any specific questions to which they might not appreciate the answers.<sup>87</sup>

Nevertheless, several Philippine officials continue to express concern over the U.S. commitment. In 1994, before Mischief Reef, Secretary of Defense Renato de Villa indicated that the Philippines might invoke the MDT if its forces were attacked by other claimants in the Spratlys, but that the U.S. probably would not respond favorably to such a request.<sup>88</sup> These doubts were also expressed in several interviews with both defense and foreign affairs officials in September 1996.<sup>89</sup> However, President Ramos was more positive about the U.S. role, both involving the defense of the Philippines and larger regional security issues. Speaking in October 1995, he revealed that he was happy with the U.S. response to the Philippines' call for support in the South China Sea dispute and even termed this response "very positive." Regionally, he made the point that the U.S. "must continue to be the fulcrum of East Asia's balance of power."<sup>90</sup> Similarly, AFP Chief of Staff General Arturo Enrile welcomed the Pentagon's 1995 decision to keep 100,000 military



forces in the region. For Enrile, this presence serves to deter aggressive acts by claimant countries in the South China Sea.<sup>91</sup>

The Philippines does accrue other benefits from its security relationship with the U.S. The Mutual Defense Board is a U.S.-Philippine committee which operates under the auspices of the MDT, and its primary purpose is to address security issues. This board meets on a regularly scheduled basis; more frequently if events dictate. As one military officer pointed out, the Philippines views the board very favorably because it provides a forum for bilateral discussions and is well institutionalized on both sides. He provided a specific example of a current project underway between the AFP and the U.S. Pacific Command in Hawaii to update a wargame to make it more applicable to post-Cold War scenarios.<sup>92</sup> The Mutual Defense Board also is valuable because it provides a means by which intelligence can be shared, a very definite requirement for the AFP as it begins the conversion from a counterinsurgency to a more conventional defense orientation.<sup>93</sup>

Although the United States no longer has bases in the Philippines, there is still a military presence, though not a permanent one. U.S. and Philippine military forces exercise with each other regularly. The largest exercise is the annual Balikatan training, a battalion size joint and combined exercise. U.S. Navy port calls are increasing with approximately 50 held in 1995. Ships regularly pay visits to Manila, Subic Bay, and Cebu (two U.S. ships were in Manila Harbor during my visit in September 1996.) One American attaché speculated that Davao City and General Santos City in Mindanao might be potential ports of call if the peace process is successful on the island.<sup>94</sup>

Having studied Philippine-U.S. relations for more than 20 years, my opinion is that this relationship is now more sound than in previous times. The removal of the bases is a major factor in this conclusion because it was difficult for many Filipinos to believe they were truly independent as long as

U.S. bases were on Philippine soil. In addition, the improving economy has contributed to a greater sense of confidence in the Philippines which will only be enhanced by hosting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) annual meeting to be held in Manila and at Subic Bay in November 1996.

There are a couple of problems which the new U.S. Ambassador in Manila is well aware he will have to try to resolve during his tenure.<sup>95</sup> The first is an acquisition and cross-serving agreement (ACSA) which would permit the U.S. to purchase and store equipment and supplies at Philippine sites for use in exercises, port calls, and other contingencies. Although the Philippines would benefit economically from the ACSA, since upwards of \$12 million in purchases might be involved, public opinion in the Philippines is negative. The primary reason for this negativism is that many Filipinos view the ACSA as the first step in a grand U.S. design to re-establish a permanent military presence in the country.<sup>96</sup> While this position may seem unreasonable to Americans, it is indicative of the strong feelings still evident in the Philippines concerning the legacy of the military bases. Another problem to be resolved is to agree to some sort of status of forces agreement (SOFA) to cover U.S. military personnel while in the Philippines on official duty such as exercises. The original protections were included in the 1947 Military Bases Agreement which the Philippine Senate rejected in 1991 leading to the removal of the bases. Again, for some Filipinos, particularly political elites, a SOFA conjures up the idea of a permanent American presence and is politically too hot to handle at the current time. This attitude may change in the future, but it will remain a difficult problem to solve.

In conclusion, Philippine national security policy is not directed against any one country. Specifically it is not arrayed against China, since the disparities between the power potentials of the two countries are too great. The Philippines has begun a military modernization program but this will be a slow process because there are so many other demands for scarce resources.

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The more important security strategies involve active participation in the ARF where the Philippines enjoys strength in numbers and can also contribute to the goal of engaging China in the effort to moderate its behavior in the Spratlys. The final component is the security relationship with the U.S. under the MDT. While there are some problems, this security tie will remain essential to the Philippines for the foreseeable future.

## **Malaysia**

### **Vital National Security Objectives and Interests**

Maintaining territorial integrity is a definite concern for Malaysia due to geographical realities. The states of Sabah and Sarawak are separated from peninsular Malaysia by approximately 100 miles of the South China Sea. The islands and atolls which Malaysia claims in the South China Sea are important as future energy sources. Some of the most country's productive oil and natural gas fields are off shore to the west of Sabah and Sarawak.<sup>97</sup> Domestic peace and stability are other important national security objectives in that Malaysia is a multi-ethnic society with approximately 60% of the population being Malay, 30% Chinese, and 8% Indian. Serious ethnic clashes occurred in the late 1960s, and the government initiated a number of programs to address ethnic issues. Nonetheless, one knowledgeable expert on ethnic affairs in Malaysia warned that both nation-building and state-building remain important government goals. While the earlier counterinsurgency efforts against a communist threat have achieved success, there still remains a domestic focus to Malaysia's national security interests.<sup>98</sup>

As is the case in the Philippines, one of the most important Malaysian national security interests is to continue regional peace and stability so that both Malaysia's and the region's economies will continue their rapid economic growth and development. During the 1990s, Malaysia's

rate of GDP growth has been one of the highest not only in East Asia but across the international system. For example, in 1994 and 1995, the economy grew by 9.2% and 9.3% respectively, and the prediction for 1996 is 8.5%.<sup>99</sup> Malaysia has become an important export-oriented country so that access to vital sealanes in the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea is vital to the continued economic success of the country.

### Threats to Perceptions

In the domestic context, the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), which was once a significant threat to the government, particularly during the period known in Malaysia as “the Emergency” (1948-1960), surrendered in the early 1990s and is no longer a viable threat. Malaysia still confronts some difficult ethnic issues which place a premium on economic development. As long as the economy continues to do so well, ethnic tensions are largely attenuated.<sup>100</sup> To this end, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad announced his Vision 2020 a few years ago. This program is designed to facilitate Malaysia’s becoming a full industrial nation-state by 2020. In some ways, it is similar to President Ramos’ Philippines 2000 project discussed earlier, but the Malaysian plan is more ambitious. One of the desired outcomes is to minimize ethnic tensions through the attainment of economic benefits for all ethnic groups. One Malaysian authority postulated that the economy would have to average 7% annual growth between now and 2020 for all the goals of the program to be achieved. This requires continued harmony at home as well as regional peace and stability.<sup>101</sup>

When it comes to regional threats, Malaysian officials are very cautious. In fact, the term “threats” is not used, but rather “challenges” or “defense of strategic interests.” This is similar to the use of the term “potential flashpoints” in the Philippines. The reason for this caution is not to be offensive to other countries in ASEAN, and, perhaps even more

important, China.<sup>102</sup> Earlier in the decade, some Malaysian officials did voice concerns about China and its intentions. For example, Major General Raja Abdul Rashid, Director of Intelligence, Malaysian Armed Forces, in a 1990 interview cautioned that China was increasing its strength in the South China Sea at the same time as the United States and the Soviet Union were reducing their presence. Although he did not use the term in this interview, General Rashid seemed to be suggesting that China might try to fill any vacuum created by the reduced presence of the two super powers.<sup>103</sup> In a December 1992 interview with the *International Herald Tribune*, Defense Minister Datuk Sri Najib Tun Razak expressed his concern that if China acquired nuclear submarines, an aircraft carrier, or developed its military bases in southern China for power projection purposes, Malaysia and other countries in Southeast Asia would have increased security worries.<sup>104</sup>

By the mid 1990s, Prime Minister Mahathir made it very plain that Malaysia did not consider China to be a threat, even after the Mischief Reef incident in February 1995. He urged China and the Philippines to resolve their differences diplomatically.<sup>105</sup> In April 1995, he proposed that ASEAN should become involved in discussing conflicting claims in the South China Sea through the ARF process.<sup>106</sup> Vice Prime Minister Zhu Rongji visited Malaysia in May 1996 and explained that China's military modernization was only defensive in nature and not directed at any country or region.<sup>107</sup> In August 1996 Prime Minister Mahathir traveled to Beijing and again reported that he was confident that China does not have expansionist intentions. During this visit, Prime Minister Li Peng also told Mahathir that China wanted to resolve the Spratly claims through negotiation.<sup>108</sup>

The explanation for the official position on China is not difficult to understand. In 1974 Malaysia was the first ASEAN country to establish normal diplomatic relations with China and has had a good relationship since that time. Malaysian officials also recognize that there is no way that their

armed forces can realistically match the capabilities of the Chinese military. Based on this realization, Mahathir and others have decided it is a better approach to try to engage China through regional groupings such as the ARF in the effort to resolve differences and protect Malaysia's expanded economic zones and claims in the South China Sea.<sup>109</sup> Malaysia has a very extensive economic relationship with China which could be jeopardized. According to one authority, Prime Minister Mahathir first expanded economic ties with China during the recession in the mid 1980s, and these ties were a major impetus to Malaysia's economic turn-around. They continue to be very important.<sup>110</sup>

Some Malaysian security experts outside the government are not so sanguine about China's intentions and do see China as a threat to Malaysian interests, particularly in the Spratlys. One of these experts made the point that he is convinced that there is not a consistent approach to foreign policy within China. President Jiang Zemin may take one position on regional issues, but he may not be able to convince others, such as leaders in the People's Liberation Army, who favor a more hard-line position on Chinese security.<sup>111</sup> Another expert took a related view and raised the point that China's foreign policy elite are not being institutionalized sufficiently below the highest decision-making level. He sees this as a problem in that these lower level officials have not established relationships with their counterparts in other countries. This may partly explain the changes which occur in China's policies related to Southeast Asia.<sup>112</sup>

As on most foreign policy issues, Prime Minister Mahathir sets the tone on Malaysian policy toward Japan. Contrary to several Southeast Asian leaders, Mahathir has encouraged Japan to assume expanded international and regional roles to include supporting U.N. peacekeeping operations. He has specifically stated that Japan should not allow its war guilt to preclude it from performing these roles and responsibilities.<sup>113</sup> None of the government

officials interviewed expressed major concerns about Japan. That was not the case, however, with some non-government security experts. One warned that Japan's defense spending continued to increase, but he did not go so far as to predict that Japan would try to recreate the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.<sup>114</sup> Most seem to believe that the U.S.-Japan security Treaty as it exists will keep Japan within bounds.

Within the region, most of those interviewed were optimistic that some of the more significant disputes with Singapore and the Philippines have diminished in intensity, particularly territorial disputes such as the old Philippine claim to Sabah. However, at least one analyst identified Indonesia as a possible regional problem for Malaysia. There are historical precedents for this concern going back to the period of confrontation in the early 1960s, and territorial issues as well involving two islands off of Sabah. But the most significant issue is the impending succession process whenever President Soeharto passes from the political scene. Nevertheless, even those who are worried about this potential problem believe that ASEAN and the ARF will be able to contain whatever may occur.<sup>115</sup>

### **National Security Strategies**

Malaysia's Defense Guidance document has three basic components: self reliance, regional cooperation, and extra-regional initiatives.<sup>116</sup> Concerning self reliance, the Malaysian government has undertaken a substantial military modernization program. Its defense budget is one of the largest within ASEAN and accounts for approximately 5% of GDP.<sup>117</sup> Because of the perceived need to protect coastal waters and expanded economic zones, the Royal Malaysian Air Force and the Royal Malaysian Navy have been the major beneficiaries of this modernization program.<sup>118</sup> For example, the Air Force recently has purchased 28 Hawk fighters from Great Britain, 18 MiG-29 fighters from Russia, and 8 F/A-18s from the

United States. The Air Force has deployed nine of its Hawk fighters to a base on Labuan Island—off the west coast of Sabah and within close proximity to its claims in the Spratlys—as a signal of its intent.<sup>119</sup> In comparison with the Philippines, Malaysia has initiated a robust military modernization program to support the self-reliant component of its national security strategy.

Malaysian defense officials have been very careful to explain this modernization program as a boost to the domestic economy and Malaysia's contribution to regional stability. For example, in 1994 Defense Minister Najib mentioned increased deterrence as one important goal of modernization, but he also pointed out that the armed forces needed to stay current with technological advances to be proficient, and these technologies could benefit the civilian economy as well.<sup>120</sup> Subsequently, he argued that a stronger Malaysian military would mean a stronger ASEAN and would also permit Malaysia to continue its support for U.N. peacekeeping operations.<sup>121</sup> Najib's successor as Defense Minister has continued to make similar arguments. In December 1995, Syed Hamid noted that the defense modernization program provided "leverage" for other industries in Malaysia.<sup>122</sup> In March 1996, he stated explicitly that Malaysia was not involved in an arms race, but was simply updating equipment which had become obsolete.<sup>123</sup> By couching Malaysia's modernization program in this context, both Najib and Syed Hamid hope to allay suspicions within the region and beyond.

As important as the self-reliance component is to Malaysia's national security policy, regional initiatives receive even more attention. ASEAN, the ARF, and the various economic growth triangles are all viewed as extremely important to national security. Based on Prime Minister Mahathir's well-known position that China is not a regional threat, the ARF is seen as an effective means by which China can be engaged in security discussions. Malaysian officials expressed satisfaction with the progress that has been made



in the ARF's three annual meetings.<sup>124</sup> One security specialist pointed out that because of the ARF's persistence, China decided that it was fruitless to continue to insist that the South China Sea disputes not be discussed at the ARF meetings. Consequently, these disputes were the subject of discussions in both 1995 and 1996. He is convinced that more progress will be made in future meetings in finally resolving these disputes.<sup>125</sup>

Because of the leading role which Malaysia's Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) has played and continues to play, the ARF Track II approach is very popular in Malaysia and viewed as a major contribution to the ARF process. The ISIS Deputy Director General identified the ISIS annual Roundtable meetings as being particularly effective as a forum for discussions and recommendations concerning regional security issues. ISIS has been hosting these roundtables since 1988, and they have grown in reputation over these years.<sup>126</sup> Interestingly, Malaysian defense authorities have decided not to publish a defense white paper because, in the words of one official, papers in the region tend to be descriptive rather than analytical and, therefore, not very helpful as a tool for increased transparency.<sup>127</sup>

Two of Malaysia's major extra-regional defense arrangements are Malaysia's membership in the Five Power Defense Arrangement (FPDA) and its security relationship with the United States. Malaysia, Singapore, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand formed the FPDA in 1971, in part because Malaysia and Singapore did not have the air and naval forces to defend their air space and coastal waters. There was also a worry that the U.S. might withdraw from the region after the Vietnam war and that Great Britain might also leave the region after its "East of Suez" announcement in the early 1970s. Now, as with many security ties forged during the Cold War, one of the major challenges for the FPDA members is to define new roles in the post-Cold War era.<sup>128</sup> The FPDA conducts an annual exercise, code

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named Exercise Starfish. The most recent iteration occurred in September 1996 and involved 21 ships, one submarine, 31 aircraft, and approximately 2,500 personnel from the five countries.<sup>129</sup>

### **The U.S. Military Presence**

The security relationship with the United States is a little more ambivalent than is the FPDA. The Undersecretary for Policy in the Ministry of Defense stated that the U.S. relationship was second in importance only to that with Australia.<sup>130</sup> Defense Minister Najib on a visit to the U.S. in June 1994 voiced support for the security relationship as an important source of technology transfer and as a contribution to Malaysia's overall defense.<sup>131</sup> Prime Minister Mahathir, on the other hand, has not been as enthusiastic about the U.S. security relationship. In late 1994, he stated that he couldn't agree with the argument that U.S. military power was "indispensable to the security of Asia." In this particular interview, Mahathir had already repeated his contention that China was not a security threat, so his statement on the U.S. should be placed in this context.<sup>132</sup> In a later interview in the German periodical *Der Spiegel*, he was even more specific when he pointed out that American and other Western countries' military presence in Europe had made little difference for the plight of Moslems fighting in Bosnia.<sup>133</sup> A Foreign Ministry official echoed Mahathir's argument in an interview in September 1996 by questioning what the U.S. presence in the region was designed to accomplish.<sup>134</sup>

Among non-governmental security experts there are some differences of opinion. One argument is that the U.S. presence serves a classic balance-of-power function in the region. Without this presence, China and Japan would likely try to fill the vacuum created by a reduced U.S. involvement. This competition between China and Japan might lead to an arms race which would be counter to the best interests of the countries in

Southeast Asia.<sup>135</sup> Another analyst, while not disputing the importance of the U.S. presence as it now exists, argued that any increase in that presence would not be welcome in Malaysia. He cited specifically the April 1996 agreement between Japan's Prime Minister Hashimoto and President Clinton to study the possibility of an expanded Japanese-U.S. relationship. He took the same position on an enhanced U.S.-Australia training and exercise program. The primary problem he identified was that these expanded security relationships would probably be perceived in China as part of an American effort to "contain" China and, therefore, become an impediment to improved regional security.<sup>136</sup>

The U.S.-Malaysia security relationship is based on the 1984 Bilateral Training and Cooperation agreement, commonly referred to as BITAC. This agreement established a series of working groups involving exercises, intelligence sharing, logistical support, and general security issues. Over the years, the number of exercises, port calls, ship visits, and aircraft/ship repairs performed in Malaysia have increased. As an example, Cope Taufan, an annual air force exercise, was conducted in early September 1996. This exercise provided the first opportunity for the Malaysian Air Force to use its MiG-29s in an exercise with the U.S. and served as an excellent training opportunity for USAF F-15s. Both sides expressed great satisfaction with how the exercise was conducted.<sup>137</sup> After the closure of the U.S. bases in the Philippines, access to facilities in other countries in Southeast Asia took on increased importance as part of what Admiral Charles Larson, Commander, Pacific Command, referred to in 1993 as the "places not bases" strategy.<sup>138</sup>

Officials in both the Malaysian Ministry of Defense and the Pentagon expressed satisfaction with the development of the BITAC process. In fact, the Undersecretary for Policy related that she would like to see BITAC expanded to cover not only military-to-military ties, but also broader

policy issues such as technology transfer.<sup>139</sup> Similarly, an official in the Office of the Secretary of Defense stated that BITAC has become the model for the establishment of military ties with other countries with which the U.S. is associated.<sup>140</sup>

The overall ambivalence of Malaysia on the importance of the U.S. security relationship is evident in differing perspectives on the American decision to attempt to moderate China's efforts to intimidate Taiwan in early 1996. Some Malaysians look very favorably on the U.S. sending two carrier battle groups into the vicinity as a sign of U.S. intent. One analyst took the position that for all intents and purposes, Taiwan is an independent country, and China's actions could be repeated against other sovereign nation-states if it were unchallenged regarding Taiwan.<sup>141</sup> However, the government's position is that China's relations with Taiwan are an internal Chinese affair, and the U.S. intervention threatened to make the situation worse rather than better.<sup>142</sup>

There are some significant differences between Philippine and Malaysian threat perceptions as well as some similarities. Malaysia's military modernization program is much more advanced than that in the Philippines, which contributes to a more confident orientation. Malaysia is also further removed from China than the Philippines and has not had a distinct confrontation with China—as the Philippines has over Mischief Reef. The historical security relationship with the U.S. is also much different. Nonetheless, there are some important similarities. The Philippines and Malaysia place major importance on ASEAN and the ARF as part of their national security strategies and are confident that these regional organizations can influence Chinese behavior to the advantage of each. Both countries are very careful in how they frame security issues so as not to appear to be anti-China or to use ASEAN as some sort of containment mechanism directed against China. The U.S. security relationship, particularly military-to-

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military ties, is growing in each country, and all indications are that this enhancement will continue into the foreseeable future even though official support for this relationship (outside of the Ministry of Defense) is less pronounced in Malaysia than in the Philippines..

## **Singapore**

### **National Security Objectives and Interests**

Just as geography is a major determinant for Malaysia's definition of vital national security interests, the same is even more true for Singapore. Singapore is a small city-state with a population of approximately 3 million located off the southern coast of Malaysia and strategically placed at the nexus of the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea. It has few natural resources and finds itself between two much larger neighbors--Malaysia to the north and Indonesia to the south. Since Singapore's population is about 75% ethnic Chinese, 15% Malay, and 5% Indian, it is frequently referred to as a Chinese island in a Malay Sea. Singapore is a major regional entrepot of world class standards with the second highest per capita income in the region. As such, it depends on peace and stability in the region so that freedom of navigation is guaranteed through the vital sealanes which are in close proximity to the island and absolutely essential to a major trading state. Many multinational corporations have their headquarters in Singapore because of its political stability and geographical location. If regional peace were disrupted, Singapore's economy would be seriously affected. Thus fostering regional stability is a vital national security objective.<sup>143</sup>

Regime survival is another national security objective in Singapore. The People's Action Party (PAP) has been the dominant political party since 1959. Lee Kuan Yew has led the party and was Prime Minister from independence in 1965 until he retired in 1990. He retains the position of

Senior Minister and continues to be a major political actor in Singapore, even though Goh Chok Tong is the Prime Minister. The PAP leaders and apparently most Singaporeans believe that the party needs to remain in power if the multiracial society is to stay in balance and the economy is to continue to grow and develop.<sup>144</sup>

### **Threat Perceptions**

Some Singaporeans have expressed a degree of anxiety over possible communal violence in the domestic context. As is the case of Malaysia, Singapore has had some problems with nation-building in a multi-ethnic society in previous years. One security policy expert warned that if the economy did not continue to grow and develop, ethnic tensions could increase and perhaps even be exploited by other countries, although he did not identify which countries might be so inclined.<sup>145</sup> This viewpoint is instructive because it is indicative of a general sense of vulnerability which several Singaporeans expressed based on geography, population size, and dependence on commerce as the foundation of economic viability.

Singapore's major threats, however, are regional in nature rather than domestic. Economic disruptions in Southeast Asia caused by conflict and interference with the searoutes in the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea would be devastating to Singapore. Even conflicts in Northeast Asia would likely have negative effects on Singapore's economy.<sup>146</sup> Whereas Malaysian and Philippine government officials were reticent to mention China as a specific regional threat, some of their Singapore counterparts were more inclined to do so. One official made the point that Singapore did not establish normal diplomatic relations with China until 1990 and was the last of the ASEAN countries at that time to do so. This delay was largely for political reasons because of Singapore's ethnic Chinese majority and the fear within the region that Singapore would do China's bidding.

Taiwan also complicates Singapore's relationship with China. Lee Kuan Yew was a personal friend of President Chiang Ching-kuo during the time he was in power in Taiwan in the 1970s and 1980s even though Singapore did not have normal diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Nonetheless, strong economic and military ties developed, and Singapore still trains some of its military forces in Taiwan even though it officially supports a one-China policy.<sup>147</sup> Chinese efforts to intimidate Taiwan prior to the March 1996 elections were looked upon as a more serious threat in Singapore than in Malaysia and were not considered to be simply an internal Chinese affair. If freedom of navigation had been impeded by the China-Taiwan dispute or if the Mischief Reef incident ever got out of hand, Singapore's economy would be damaged. This interpretation helps to explain why so many of Singapore's officials expressed discomfort at the prospects of a more powerful China dissatisfied with the status quo in the region, even though Singapore itself has no conflicting territorial claims with China.<sup>148</sup>

In relation to Japan, the U.S.-Japan security treaty is viewed by many Singaporeans as being the key to future Japanese behavior. As long as the U.S. remains engaged with Japan and has military forces deployed there, Japan is not perceived to be a major threat in Singapore. This orientation provides an interesting comparison with Malaysia. Whereas several Malaysians expressed some skepticism about the April 1996 Clinton-Hashimoto decision to explore the possibility of expanded security cooperation, those interviewed in Singapore were encouraged by this decision because enhanced security cooperation would make it more likely that the United States will stay involved with Japan.<sup>149</sup>

Because of the size and proximity of Indonesia as well as the historical relationship in the 1960s, Singapore is watching closely as the political situation in Indonesia evolves. Whenever the Soeharto succession occurs, if it does not go smoothly, some in Singapore fear that the contenders

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for power may attempt to define a foreign threat to solidify their political position. In this scenario, Singapore could be a target. Similarly, if the contenders for power decide to go after the ethnic Chinese minority in Indonesia who exercise a disproportionate control over the economy (as has happened in the past), Singapore could be confronted with a significant refugee problem which might be difficult to manage. In either event, regional stability would suffer. Singapore does not want to see happen.<sup>150</sup> There is another point of view, however, which is more optimistic about the Indonesian political succession. Those so inclined believe that Indonesia has developed political institutions which are strong enough to provide for an orderly transition and that the political elite in Indonesia realize that continued economic progress requires political stability.<sup>151</sup>

### **National Security Strategies**

Because of the nature of the threats just outlined, Singapore has developed a comprehensive national security policy which features both deterrence and diplomacy. It has the most dominant economy in Southeast Asia and is willing to allocate the necessary resources to build a very potent military force. The government spends approximately 6% of its GDP on the armed forces—the largest percentage of the largest GDP in ASEAN.<sup>152</sup> Singapore has a well established military modernization program, particularly for air and naval equipment. Because of Singapore's small size, it has to be prepared to fight any battles outside of Singapore's actual territory.<sup>153</sup> Although Singapore has a robust military force, it would prefer to resolve disputes through diplomacy if possible, and regional organizations provide important opportunities to do so.

ASEAN and the ARF are central to Singapore's diplomatic efforts, just as these organizations are for the Philippines and Malaysia. Most of those interviewed in Singapore expressed satisfaction with the ARF annual



meetings and the various inter-sessional gatherings as effective means to build confidence and address issues. The ARF also is a good tool to insure that external powers, particularly the United States, remain involved with regional security issues. Mischief Reef presented a challenge to the ARF, but most of those interviewed expressed the opinion that the ASEAN members of the ARF in particular were successful in convincing China that it needed to accept a multilateral approach to resolving this territorial dispute.<sup>154</sup> This was not a unanimous opinion, and one scholar questioned whether China would continue to participate in the ARF based on his uncertainty concerning China's long-term intentions in Southeast Asia.<sup>155</sup>

A Ministry of Foreign Affairs official who has been closely involved with the ARF since 1994 offered the following evaluation from Singapore's perspective.<sup>156</sup> One of the reasons for the Ministry's satisfaction and optimism derives from China's changing attitude toward the ARF. In his opinion, the Chinese initially viewed the ARF as a tool of the U.S. containment strategy and were very suspicious of its motives and methods. Over time, however, China has changed its perspective and now sees the ARF as a forum through which China can advance its own interests. This changed attitude is partly explainable in that the ARF is now better established and accepted than it was in 1994. But he believes ASEAN can also take some credit because it took a firm position on Mischief Reef and the Chinese realized they could not stonewall discussions and still be considered a member in good standing of the ARF.

Singapore has played an important role in the ARF's success in part through the Concept Paper it introduced at the 1995 meeting which prepared the groundwork for establishing the ARF inter-sessionals and also developed the approach for sequentially addressing confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy, and conflict resolution. Because of ASEAN's success

in addressing regional problems, he is adamantly convinced that ASEAN should continue to take the lead in the ARF process.

From Singapore's perspective, the FPDA is valuable for many of the same reasons that it is for Malaysia. It provides training and exercise opportunities which benefit Singapore, and the FPDA serves to keep external powers involved in Southeast Asia.<sup>157</sup> However, it is the U.S. security presence which is looked upon by many Singaporeans as the most necessary component to complement Singapore's own efforts to provide for its national security.

### **The U.S. Military Presence**

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, as the U.S. negotiations with the Philippines for an extension of the Military Bases Agreement dragged on, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew indicated that Singapore might be willing to offer the United States access to certain facilities in Singapore. In a 1989 interview, he stated that he was amenable to an increased American presence because he feared that the Soviet Union, operating from bases in Vietnam, could be a threat to Singapore's interests.<sup>158</sup> One year later, in November 1990, Vice President Dan Quayle traveled to Singapore and signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Prime Minister Lee which permitted the United States to send aircraft to Singapore "several times each year on training deployments of several weeks each." Increased visits for U.S. Navy ships also were included. To prepare for these visits, the United States agreed to assign approximately 100 Air Force and Navy personnel in Singapore.<sup>159</sup>

President Bush visited Singapore in January 1991 after talks with the Philippines collapsed. He and the new Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong agreed that a small number of those forces stationed in the Philippines would move to Singapore to help support the ship and aircraft deployments. The American President stated at the time that the U.S. action would discourage

regional conflict and arms proliferation as well as serving as a tangible example of American resolve to retain a credible presence in Southeast Asia.<sup>160</sup>

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, some of Singapore's leading public officials changed their rationale for supporting the continuation of the U.S. military presence. In January 1992, the Second Minister for Foreign Affairs wrote that East Asia's hopes for economic prosperity could be harmed if the U.S. withdrew from the region. He predicted that Japan would likely build up its military forces if this occurred, and China and Korea would take steps to counteract Japan. The result would be an arms race and increased instability.<sup>161</sup> Lee Kuan Yew further developed this theme later in 1992 when he urged Singapore and other Southeast Asian countries to open their markets to U.S. goods so that American citizens would better appreciate that the United States has vital national security interests in the region. He supported continued U.S. engagement.<sup>162</sup> Defense Minister Yeo Ning Hong encouraged other Southeast Asian countries to provide access to U.S. military forces in support of Admiral Larson's "places not bases" program.<sup>163</sup> Each of these officials made the point in slightly different ways that the U.S. was important for regional security and that the countries in Southeast Asia should be willing to do their part to keep the U.S. military there.

Initially, Singapore's decision to expand the U.S. presence was unpopular in Malaysia. The Malaysian Defense Minister in 1989 compared Singapore to Israel in that the close Israeli relationship with the United States damaged or impeded Middle East solidarity. He believed that ASEAN solidarity would be affected similarly by Singapore drawing closer to the U.S.<sup>164</sup> Another Malaysian official was critical based on his opinion that there was no sufficient threat to justify this closer security relationship and that the U.S. military in Singapore would violate the ASEAN principle of creating a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) which had

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been an ASEAN core value since the early 1970s.<sup>165</sup> After it became evident that the United States was going to proceed with its plans to station some military personnel in Singapore to support ship visits and exercises, Malaysia modified its position somewhat. The Deputy Prime Minister in 1990 stated that his government was opposed to permanent U.S. bases in Singapore but would not object to Singapore allowing the U.S. to use some of its facilities.<sup>166</sup> Over the intervening years, Malaysia's objections have further attenuated. During a series of interviews in September 1996, not one Malaysian official or academic raised the issue of the U.S.-Singapore security relationship.

The two major American military units in Singapore are the 497th Combat Training Squadron and the Command Logistics Group Western Pacific. The former is a USAF organization, and the second belongs to the U.S. Navy. There are approximately 160 Air Force and Navy members assigned to these units which are located in a warehouse at the Port of Sembawang.<sup>167</sup> In 1995, 65 U.S. Navy ships paid port calls in Singapore, and there were six major USAF exercises with the Singapore Air Force, code named Commando Sling. Each exercise lasted for one month, with USAF units coming from bases in Japan (including Kadena AB in Okinawa), Alaska, and Arizona. Reserve and Guard units also participated on occasion. The military-to-military ties are also enhanced by Singapore Air Force units training in the United States. Singapore maintains a squadron of its F-16s at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona for training purposes and also does CH-47 helicopter training in Grand Prairie, Texas.<sup>168</sup> In addition to ship visits and USAF exercises, ships of the Seventh Fleet pass through the Strait of Malacca and South China Sea on a regular basis, so there is a visible American military presence in and around Singapore.

In comparison with the Philippines and Malaysia, Singapore is much more explicit about the importance of the U.S. military presence. This different perspective is partly explained by different threat perceptions, but

also because Singapore has a more pronounced national security policy than do the other two countries. There are also significant political differences. Whereas the ZOPFAN principle is very important in Malaysia, it is far less so in Singapore. As one official explained, ZOPFAN is an ideal for the future, but for the present it is more important for Singapore to do all that it can to keep the U.S. engaged in the region.<sup>169</sup> Singapore also has offered its assistance in trying to convince other countries in Southeast Asia to welcome U.S. forces for exercises. An example of this is its effort to persuade Indonesia to allow USAF and USN aircraft to use the air-to-ground range near Siabu on Sumatra. The effort will probably come to fruition sometime in 1997.<sup>170</sup>

Why is the U.S. military connection so important to Singapore? The basic rationale repeated by most of those interviewed in 1996 is that Singapore perceives a strategic triangle in East Asia, or as one government official described it, a strategic tripod.<sup>171</sup> Japan and China are two of the legs of this triangle, but the United States is the base. If the base changes, then the other two sides may attempt to rearrange the whole triangle according to this analogy. It is in Singapore's national security interests, therefore, to keep the Americans involved in a meaningful way.<sup>172</sup> The status quo has provided Singapore with numerous opportunities which it has taken advantage of to become an economic powerhouse in East Asia. Its leaders want to maintain the status quo into the foreseeable future.

The greatest threat to the continuation of the U.S. leg of the triangle from Singapore's perspective, is domestic politics in the United States. To shore up American support, Singapore has taken the lead in volunteering to host U.S. forces and in trying to convince its neighbors to expand economic opportunities for U.S. exports and investments as well as to permit access for U.S. forces to facilities in the region.<sup>173</sup> Although one security expert questioned the value of the 100,000 troop pledge in the 1995 Pentagon study

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because most of these forces are deployed in Northeast Asia, there is general agreement that U.S. credibility in the region was enhanced by its response to the China-Taiwan crisis early in 1996.<sup>174</sup> Again, this serves as an interesting comparison with Malaysia which viewed this problem as strictly an internal Chinese affair. While senior Singaporean leaders, such as Lee Kwan Yew, have not hesitated to criticize U.S. human rights policies, they have generally been supportive of foreign policy initiatives which they perceive will keep the U.S. engaged in the region.<sup>175</sup>

### **Conclusion**

This concluding section will be brief because many comparisons involving the basic framework affecting the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore have been presented in the text. For all three countries, continued economic growth and development are vital national security objectives. In the case of the Philippines, an improving economy is particularly important because it contributes directly to reducing the appeals of various insurgent groups which have been an internal threat. In Malaysia and Singapore, economic expansion enhances cooperation among the various ethnic groups.

Regional instability is a major threat for each country primarily because such instability would disrupt economic growth and development. The Philippines and Malaysia are reluctant to identify any specific country as a threat to regional stability, particularly China. Even though the Philippines has experienced a recent confrontation with China over a territorial dispute in the South China Sea, its leaders have chosen to try to engage the Chinese in broad negotiations. Malaysia is even more emphatic that negotiation through the ARF process is the best way to influence Chinese behavior. Singapore is less reticent to challenge China, but still supports regional dialogue through the ARF.

There are some important similarities and differences in the national security strategies of each country. The Philippines is limited by economic constraints as to what degree and how fast it can modernize its military forces, certainly among the worst equipped in ASEAN. The U.S. security commitment through the Mutual Defense Treaty remains very important, and the military-to-military ties are gradually improving now several years after the base closures. The political and economic components are also essential for Philippine security, especially ASEAN and the ARF as well as APEC and the various growth triangles in the region. Malaysia's military modernization continues at an impressive pace, but the primary emphasis is on diplomacy to resolve regional disputes. Its leaders are particularly cautious about offending China, and this influences its security relationship with the U.S. Any American action which is perceived as attempting to contain China is not welcome in Kuala Lumpur. Singapore has the most robust military in the region, but is also the most outspoken in supporting the continued U.S. security presence based on its strategic triangle orientation.

Two final comments: in the second section of this paper, I identified several possible threats in Southeast Asia from an American perspective. Most of these were addressed by those I interviewed in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore, but two were not. No one raised Cambodia as a potential threat. This may be explained in part because some improvements have occurred since the 1994 U.N. sponsored elections. Also, ASEAN has established itself as being an effective organization in dealing with Cambodia which wants to join ASEAN soon. The second threat not specifically addressed was nuclear proliferation. This topic was raised only in the context of the U.S.-Japan security relationship. If this relationship changes dramatically, some are concerned that Japan might re-evaluate its nuclear weapons policy.

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Each of the countries I visited places significant importance on the ASEAN Regional Forum as an important forum for addressing and hopefully resolving regional disputes. The United States needs to take this into account in its own evaluation of the ARF. While this organization may not be as structured as some in the U.S. would prefer, it can serve American interests. China is a good example. The ARF has achieved some success in engaging China on regional security issues which is an American goal too. By allowing the ARF to take the lead, the United States might well be more successful in moderating Chinese behavior than by pursuing the same objective through bilateral means.



## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> "Agreement Between the United States of America and the Republic of the Philippines Concerning Military Bases," 14 March 1947, *Treaties and Other International Agreements Series* (hereafter TIAS), 1775 (1947-48). For additional history of the negotiations leading to this agreement, see William E. Berry, Jr., U.S. Bases in the Philippines: The Evolution of the Special Relationship (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 1-69.
- <sup>2</sup> Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines, TIAS 2529 (1952).
- <sup>3</sup> Frederick S. Dunn, Peace-Making and the Settlement with Japan, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 134, and Richard B. Finn, Winners in Peace, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 283-4.
- <sup>4</sup> Security Treaty Between the United States of America, Australia, and New Zealand, TIAS 2429 (1952). Security Treaty Between the United States of America and Japan, TIAS 2491 (1952). Treaty of Peace with the Allied Powers, TIAS 2490 (1952).
- <sup>5</sup> Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States of America and Republic of Korea, TIAS 3097 (1954).
- <sup>6</sup> Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States of America and the Republic of China, TIAS 3178 (1955).
- <sup>7</sup> "Southeast Asia Treaty Organization: Response to the Communist Threat" in Marvin Gettleman, ed., Vietnam: History, Documents, and Opinions (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1970), pp. 121-124. In 1977, the SEATO member countries ended this alliance although the Manila Pact remains in effect.
- <sup>8</sup> Robert E. Osgood, "The Diplomacy of Allied Relations: Europe and Japan" in Robert E. Osgood, ed., Retreat from Empire, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 164.
- <sup>9</sup> William E. Berry, Jr., "Republic of Korea," in Douglas J. Murray and Paul R. Viotti, eds., The Defense Policies of Nations, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 2nd edition, pp. 408-411.
- <sup>10</sup> Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith, (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), p. 190.
- <sup>11</sup> Richard H. Solomon, The China Factor, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1981), p. 304.
- <sup>12</sup> A copy of the Taiwan Relations Act can be found in Solomon, The China Factor, pp. 304-314.
- <sup>13</sup> Robert E. Osgood, "The Revitalization of Containment," Foreign Affairs: America and the World, 1981, Vol. 60, No. 3, 1981, pp. 483-494.
- <sup>14</sup> For a good statement of this strategy, see James A. Kelly, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, in testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on East Asia and Pacific Affairs, 21 March 1985.
- <sup>15</sup> New York Times (hereafter NYT) 14 November 1983, p. 1.
- <sup>16</sup> NYT, 16 September 1982, p. 3, and 17 September 1982, p. 3.
- <sup>17</sup> A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Looking Toward the 21st Century, an undated Department of Defense publication. For press coverage of this document, see NYT, 1 February 1990, p. 15.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 6 and 15.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

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- <sup>20</sup> International Herald Tribune, 22 November 1991, p. 1, and the Far Eastern Economic Review (hereafter FEER), 5 December 1991, p. 28. For a thorough study of the North Korean nuclear weapons program, see William E. Berry, Jr., "North Korea's Nuclear Program: The Clinton Administration's Response," Institute for National Security Studies Occasional Paper 3, USAF Academy, March 1995.
- <sup>21</sup> Korea and World Affairs, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 1990, pp. 196-7.
- <sup>22</sup> International Herald Tribune, 28-29 September 1991, p. 2.
- <sup>23</sup> The original MBA went into effect in 1947 with a 99-year expiration date. However, in 1966, Secretary of State Rusk and Foreign Minister Romulo negotiated an agreement which reduced this period to 25 years from that time. As a result of the Rusk-Romulo Agreement, the MBA was scheduled to expire in 1991.
- <sup>24</sup> For a summary of these inconclusive negotiations in 1990, see the International Herald Tribune, 8 November 1990, p. 2, 9 November 1990, p. 2, and 10-11 November 1990, p. 3.
- <sup>25</sup> See FEER, 27 June 1991, pp. 13-14, and the International Herald Tribune, 14 June 1991, p. 2, 16 July 1991, p. 1, 10 September 1991, p. 1, and 27 November 1991, p. 1.
- <sup>26</sup> International Herald Tribune, 18 July 1991, p. 1.
- <sup>27</sup> NYT, 17 September 1991, p. 4.
- <sup>28</sup> International Herald Tribune, 1 October 1992, p. 3.
- <sup>29</sup> FEER, 22 November 1990, pp. 10-11.
- <sup>30</sup> "Report on the Bottom-Up Review," October 1993, pp. 6-9.
- <sup>31</sup> "United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region," February 1995 (hereafter referred to as the DOD Report), pp. 24-25.
- <sup>32</sup> Author's interview with Mary Tighe, Desk Officer for Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore, International Security Affairs, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 17 July 1996. The controversy involves setting a specific force level such as 100,000. Some are concerned that if the U.S. would decide to reduce this number, regardless of the reasons, this reduction would signal a change in the U.S. commitment.
- <sup>33</sup> There are several good accounts of the territorial disputes involving the Spratlys. The most comprehensive are Mark J. Vallencia, "China and the South China Sea Dispute," Adelphi Paper 298, 1995; Tim Huxley, "Insecurity in the ASEAN Region," Royal United Services Institute for Defense Studies, Whitehall Paper 23, pp. 29-32; Sheldon Simon, "The Regionalism of Defense in Southeast Asia," the National Bureau of Asian Research Analysis, Vol 3, No. 1, June 1992, pp. 13-14; Sheldon Simon, "Regional Issues in Southeast Asian Security," The National Bureau of Asian Research Analysis, Vol. 4, No. 2, July 1993, pp. 11-14; and Amitav Acharya, "An Arms Race in Post-Cold War Southeast Asia?," Pacific Strategic Paper 8, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, pp. 11-17.
- <sup>34</sup> Vallencia, p. 14, and Simon, "Regional Issues in Southeast Asian Security," pp. 12-13.
- <sup>35</sup> NYT, 19 February 1995, p. 8, FEER, 13 April 1995, pp. 24-28, and FEER, 3 August 1995, pp. 22-23.
- <sup>36</sup> Vallencia, p. 21.
- <sup>37</sup> DOD Report, p. 20.
- <sup>38</sup> Nye's statement is found in FEER, 3 August 1995, p. 22.
- <sup>39</sup> For good articles on China's efforts to intimidate Taiwan and influence the outcome of the presidential election, see NYT, 10 March 1996, p. 8, and FEER, 14 March 1996, pp. 18-21.

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- <sup>40</sup> For the outcome of the December 1995 parliamentary elections, see FEER, 14 December 1995, pp. 14-15.
- <sup>41</sup> NYT, 24 March 1996, p. 1.
- <sup>42</sup> See A. M. Rosenthal, NYT, 6 February 1996, p. 19, and NYT, 12 March 1996, p. 1.
- <sup>43</sup> Kent E. Caulder, "Asia's Empty Tank," Foreign Affairs, Vol 75, No. 2, March-April 1996, pp. 55-69.
- <sup>44</sup> Caulder, pp. 61-62.
- <sup>45</sup> For a similar argument, see Jim Rowher, Asia Rising, pp. 318-320.
- <sup>46</sup> DOD Report, p. 23.
- <sup>47</sup> Assistant Secretary Lord's interview is found in FEER, 4 April 1996, p. 17.
- <sup>48</sup> FEER, 15 August 1996, p. 16, and NYT.
- <sup>49</sup> FEER, 22 August 1996, pp. 14-16, and 29 August 1996, pp. 20-24.
- <sup>50</sup> Donald E. Weatherbee, "Southeast Asia at Mid-Decade: Independence through Interdependence" in Southeast Asian Affairs 1995, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, pp. 11-14.
- <sup>51</sup> For details on the North Korean nuclear weapons program and the U.S. response, see William E. Berry, Jr., "North Korea's Nuclear Program: The Clinton Administration's Response," Institute for National Security Studies Occasional Paper, USAF Academy, March 1995. The North Korean decision to withdraw from the NPT is discussed on pp. 8-11.
- <sup>52</sup> For a good article on Japan's anti-nuclear sentiments, see Thomas U. Berger, "From Sword to Chrysanthemum: Japan's Culture of Anti-Militarism" in International Security, Vol 17, No. 4, Spring 1993, pp. 119-150.
- <sup>53</sup> This argument concerning the uses of nationalism is developed in FEER, 9 November 1995, pp. 20-26.
- <sup>54</sup> For a good point-counterpoint approach, see Denny Roy, "Hegemon on the Horizon: China's Threat to East Asian Security," and Michael G. Gallagher, "China's Illusory Threat to the South China Sea," International Security, Vol. 19, No. 1, Summer 1994. Roy's article is found on pp. 149-168 and Gallagher's on pp. 169-194.
- <sup>55</sup> For an excellent, balanced article on this debate, see Michael D. Swaine, "The Modernization of the Chinese People's Liberation Army: Prospects and Implications for Northeast Asia," The National Bureau of Asian Research Analysis, Vol 5, No. 3, October 1994, especially pp. 6-14.
- <sup>56</sup> Swaine, p. 12. See note 13 for the specifics. For one of the best articles detailing PLA involvement in the domestic economy, See John W. Lewis, Hua Di, and Xue Litai, "Beijing's Defense Establishment: The Boundaries of U.S. Influence," International Security, Vol 15, No. 4, Spring 1991, pp. 87-109.
- <sup>57</sup> Secretary Perry's speech at the National Defense University, 13 February 1996, author's copy. See pp. 3-6 for his comments on China.
- <sup>58</sup> Author's interview with Brig General (retired) Eduardo T. Cabanlig, President, National Defense College of the Philippines, in Manila, 5 September 1996.
- <sup>59</sup> Jose Almonte, the National Security Advisor, outlined some of the provisions of Philippines 2000 in a speech to the Command and General Staff College of the Philippines on 18 November 1994. Brig General Ismael Z. Villareal, Commandant of the Joint Services Command and Staff College, provided the author with a copy of this speech during an interview in Manila on 4 September 1996. The GDP growth for 1994 and 1995 is found in A United States Policy for the Changing Realities of East

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Asia, published by the Asia/Pacific Research Center at Stanford University, p. 61 (hereafter the Stanford Report). The projected growth for 1996 is provided in *FEER*, 23 May 1996, p. 59.

<sup>60</sup> Author's interview with Hank Hendrickson, Political Counselor, U.S. Embassy, Manila, 3 September 1996. On the 7-10 year period of regional peace, see also the speech by National Security Advisor Almonte, p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> For details on the peace offensive on Mindanao, see *FEER*, 5 September 1996, pp. 24-26. Brig General Villareal argued for caution concerning this peace agreement because he is not convinced that the MNLF and the more extreme Islamic groups really want to be integrated into Mindanao's political and economic systems. If their real goal is some sort of independence, then the agreement is not likely to work in his view. He expressed his opinions in an interview with the author in Manila, 4 September 1996.

<sup>62</sup> Author's interview with Brig General (retired) Cubanlig in Manila on 5 September 1996.

<sup>63</sup> Aileen S. P. Baviera, Head, Center for International Relations and Strategic Studies, Foreign Service Institute, Department of Foreign Affairs, Manila, in an interview with the author on 6 September 1996.

<sup>64</sup> Foreign Broadcast Information Service East Asia Daily Report (hereafter FBIS-EAS), 1 November 1993, pp. 45-46.

<sup>65</sup> FBIS-EAS, 15 November 1993, pp. 47-49.

<sup>66</sup> The Manila Chronicle editorial was printed in FBIS-EAS, 1 February 1995, pp. 48-49.

<sup>67</sup> FBIS-EAS, 8 February 1995, pp. 44-45.

<sup>68</sup> FBIS-EAS, 22 February 1995, p. 55. For other coverage of the Mischief Reef crisis at the time it occurred, see *NYT*, 19 February 1995, p. 8 and *FEER*, 23 February 1995, pp. 14-16.

<sup>69</sup> FBIS-EAS, 25 October 1995, p. 60.

<sup>70</sup> Author's interviews with Commodore Artemio R. Arugay, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans, Armed Forces of the Philippines in Manila, 4 September 1996, and with Ms. Aileen S.P. Baviera in Manila, 6 September 1996.

<sup>71</sup> Author's interview with Commodore Artemio R. Arugay in Manila, 4 September 1996, and Merliza M. Makinano, Captain Joel N. Madarang, and Raymond J. G. Quilop, all members of the Office of Strategic and Special Studies, Armed Forces of the Philippines in Manila, 4 September 1996.

<sup>72</sup> Author's interviews with Commodore Arugay in Manila on 4 September 1996 and with Colonel David Hall, Army Attache, U.S. Embassy, Manila, 3 September 1996.

<sup>73</sup> The Stanford Report, p. 63.

<sup>74</sup> Author's interviews with Commodore Arugay and Merliza M. Makinano, et al, in Manila, 4 September 1996.

<sup>75</sup> Michael Antolik, "The ASEAN Regional Forum: The Spirit of Constructive Engagement," *Contemporary Southeast Asia Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 2, September 1994, pp. 117-136, and Tim Huxley, *Insecurity in the ASEAN Region*. Whitehall Paper Series #23, 1993, The Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, London, pp. 76-79. See also Sheldon Simon, "Security, Economic Liberalism and Democracy: Asian Elite Perceptions of Post-Cold War Foreign Policy Values, The National Bureau of Asian Research Analysis, Vol. 7, No. 2, September 1996, p. 6.

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- <sup>76</sup> Author's interview with Lt Colonel Alan G. Young, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State, Washington D.C., 16 July 1996.
- <sup>77</sup> FBIS-EAS, 24 July 1996, pp. 1-2.
- <sup>78</sup> Author's interview with Lt Colonel Young in Washington, 16 July 1996.
- <sup>79</sup> Susan L. Shirk, "Chinese Views on Asia-Pacific Regional Security Cooperation," The National Bureau of Asian Research Analysis, Vol. 5, No. 5, December 1994, p. 11; Banning Garrett and Bonnie Glaser, "Multilateral Security in the Asia-Pacific Region and Its Impact on Chinese Interests: Views from Beijing," Contemporary Southeast Asia Journal, Vol. 16, No. 1, June 1994, pp. 22-23; and Thomas J. Christensen, "Chinese Realpolitik," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 75, No. 5, September-October 1996, pp. 39-40.
- <sup>80</sup> FBIS-EAS, 24 July 1996, pp. 2-4.
- <sup>81</sup> For a more pessimistic view of the ARF, see FEER, 1 August 1996, pp. 14-15.
- <sup>82</sup> Philippine Foreign Minister Domingo L. Siazon, Jr. makes a strong argument for the value of ARF to the Philippines in a speech to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps in Manila, 5 January 1996. Brig General Villareal gave the author a copy of this speech during an interview in Manila on 4 September 1996. Siazon's reference to the ARF is found in pp. 29-30 of his speech.
- <sup>83</sup> Commodore Artemio R. Arugay presented a particularly persuasive argument in support of the ARF during an interview with the author in Manila on 4 September 1996.
- <sup>84</sup> Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of the Philippine, TIAS 2529 (1952).
- <sup>85</sup> Berry, U.S. Bases in the Philippines: The Evolution of the Special Relationship, pp. 237-38. Larry Niksch, Asian Specialist at the Congressional Research Service in Washington D.C., provided the author with a copy of the Vance letter during an interview on 16 July 1996.
- <sup>86</sup> Berry, U.S. Bases in the Philippines: The Evolution of the Special Relationship, p. 239.
- <sup>87</sup> Author's interviews with Mary Tighe, Desk Officer, Officer of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, Washington D.C., 17 July 1996, and Hank Hendrickson, Political Counselor, U.S. Embassy, Manila, 3 September 1996.
- <sup>88</sup> FBIS-EAS, 25 January 1994, pp. 63-64.
- <sup>89</sup> Brig General Ismael Z. Villareal from the Joint Services Command and General Staff College and Aileen S.P. Baviera from the Foreign Service Institute were particularly persuasive in interviews on 4 and 6 September 1996, respectively, in Manila.
- <sup>90</sup> FBIS-EAS, 25 October 1995, pp. 60-61.
- <sup>91</sup> FBIS-EAS, 9 March 1995, p. 40.
- <sup>92</sup> Author's interview with Commodore Artemio R. Arugay in Manila on 4 September 1996.
- <sup>93</sup> For more on intelligence sharing, particularly related to Mischief Reef, see FEER, 6 April 1995, pp. 14-16.
- <sup>94</sup> Author's interview with Colonel David Hall in Manila on 3 September 1996.
- <sup>95</sup> The problems identified in this paragraph came from the author's interview with Ambassador Thomas Hubbard and Deputy Chief of Mission Gene Martin in Manila on 5 September 1996. Ambassador Hubbard was the DCM in Manila from 1990-1993 and is well versed on Philippine politics and the bilateral relationship.

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<sup>96</sup> For a series of articles on the ACSA, both pro and con, see FBIS-EAS, 28 November 1994, pp. 75-77, 29 November 1994, pp. 64-65, and 12 July 1996, pp. 84-85.

<sup>97</sup> Author's interview with J.N. Mak, Director of Research, Malaysian Institute of Maritime Affairs, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 9 September 1996.

<sup>98</sup> Author's interview with Mohamed Jawhar, Deputy Director General, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 12 September 1996.

<sup>99</sup> The Stanford Report, p. 61.

<sup>100</sup> Author's interview with Mohamed Jawhar in Kuala Lumpur, 12 September 1996.

<sup>101</sup> Author's interview with Dr. Stephen Leong, Assistant Director-General and Director of Japan Studies, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 12 September 1996.

<sup>102</sup> Author's interview with Mohamed Jawhar who used the term "challenges" and with Ms. Siti Azizah, Under Secretary for Policy, Ministry of Defense, in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996. She used the term "defense of strategic interests."

<sup>103</sup> FBIS-EAS, 22 February 1990, pp. 39-42.

<sup>104</sup> Defense Minister Najib's interview is found in International Herald Tribune, 21 December 1992, p. 2. However, by 1994, Najib had changed his opinion to a certain extent in that he was quoted as viewing China's military modernization program as primarily defensive in nature. He did not believe China would be a threat in the short to mid term. See FBIS-EAS, 12 December 1994, pp. 68-70.

<sup>105</sup> FBIS-EAS, 22 February 1995, p. 45. For an earlier comment, see FBIS-EAS, 23 January 1995, p. 57. See FEER, 23 February 1995, p. 32, for a good summary of Prime Minister Mahathir's views on the China relationship.

<sup>106</sup> FBIS-EAS, 5 April 1995, pp. 33-34.

<sup>107</sup> FBIS-EAS, 24 May 1996, p. 49.

<sup>108</sup> FBIS-EAS, 28 August 1996, pp. 55-56.

<sup>109</sup> Author's interviews with Ms. Siti Azizah in Kuala Lumpur on 13 September 1996 and with Nazirah Hussan, Undersecretary for Policy-ASEAN Region, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996.

<sup>110</sup> Author's interview with Dr. Stephen Leong in Kuala Lumpur, 12 September 1996.

<sup>111</sup> Author's interview with Abdul Razak Baginda, Executive Director, Malaysian Strategic Research Center, Kuala Lumpur, 11 September 1996.

<sup>112</sup> Author's interview with J.N. Mak in Kuala Lumpur, 9 September 1996.

<sup>113</sup> FBIS-EAS, 23 August 1994, p. 53.

<sup>114</sup> Author's interview with Mohamed Jawhar in Kuala Lumpur, 12 September 1996.

<sup>115</sup> Author's interview with Abdul Razak Baginda in Kuala Lumpur, 11 September 1996.

<sup>116</sup> Author's interview with Ms. Siti Azizah in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996. As Undersecretary for Policy in the Ministry of Defense she has first hand experience with the preparation of the Defense Guidance.

<sup>117</sup> The Stanford Report, p. 63.

<sup>118</sup> Author's interview with J.N. Mak in Kuala Lumpur, 9 September 1996. For a very good summary of the military modernization programs in Southeast Asia, see ASEAN Arms Acquisitions: Developing Transparency a joint research project sponsored by the Malaysian Institute of Maritime Affairs and the Stockholm

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International Peace Research Institute published in July 1995. J.N. Mak, Bates Gill, and Siemon Wezeman are the primary authors.

<sup>119</sup> Author's interview with Colonel Patrick A. Caldwell, U.S. Air Attaché in Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, 9 September 1996. The author was the Air Attaché in Malaysia from 1990-1993 when most decisions on the current Air Force modernization program were made.

<sup>120</sup> FBIS-EAS, 4 March 1994, p. 51.

<sup>121</sup> FBIS-EAS, 1 August 1994, p. 79.

<sup>122</sup> FBIS-EAS, 8 December 1995, p. 53.

<sup>123</sup> FBIS-EAS, 7 March 1996, p. 55.

<sup>124</sup> Author's interviews with Ms. Siti Azizah from the Ministry of Defense and Ms. Nazirah Hussan from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kuala Lumpur on 13 September 1996.

<sup>125</sup> Author's interview with Dr. Stephen Leong in Kuala Lumpur, 12 September 1996.

<sup>126</sup> Author's interview with Mohamed Jawhar in Kuala Lumpur, 12 September 1996.

<sup>127</sup> Author's interview with Ms. Siti Azizah in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996.

<sup>128</sup> Author's interview with Ms. Siti Azizah in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996.

<sup>129</sup> International Herald Tribune, 3 September 1996, p. 4., and The Sunday Times (Singapore), 15 September 1996, p. 27.

<sup>130</sup> Author's interview with Ms. Siti Azizah in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996.

<sup>131</sup> FBIS-EAS, 30 June 1994, p. 47, and 8 July 1994, pp. 31-34.

<sup>132</sup> FBIS-EAS, 1 December 1994, p. 35.

<sup>133</sup> FBIS-EAS, 24 August 1995, pp. 50-53.

<sup>134</sup> Author's interview with Ms. Nazirah Hussan in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996.

<sup>135</sup> Author's interview with J.N. Mak in Kuala Lumpur, 9 September 1996.

<sup>136</sup> Author's interview with Mohamed Jawhar, 12 September 1996.

<sup>137</sup> Author's interviews with Lt General Ahmad Saruji, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force, in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996, and with Colonel Patrick A. Caldwell in the U.S. Embassy on 9 September 1996. For a comprehensive article on the U.S.-Malaysian security relationship, see Nayan Chanda, "U.S. Maintains Broad Asian Military Pacts," Asian Wall Street Journal, 8 April 1992, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> FEER, 22 April 1993, pp. 15-16.

<sup>139</sup> Author's interview with Ms. Siti Azizah in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996.

<sup>140</sup> Author's interview with Mary Tighe in Washington, 17 July 1996.

<sup>141</sup> This point was made by Abdul Razak Beginda in an interview with the author in Kuala Lumpur, 11 September 1996. A similar view was expressed by J.N. Mak in an interview on 9 September 1996 in Kuala Lumpur.

<sup>142</sup> Author's interview with Nazirah Hussan at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kuala Lumpur, 13 September 1996. Mohamad Jawhar made a similar argument in an interview with the author on 12 September 1996.

<sup>143</sup> Author's interview with Peter Chong, Senior Assistant Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Singapore, 17 September 1996.

<sup>144</sup> Author's interview with Emil Skodon, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy, Singapore, 16 September 1996.

<sup>145</sup> Author's interview with Dr. Kwa Chong Guan, Director of the Department of Strategic Studies, Singapore Armed Forces Training Institute, in Singapore, 16 September 1996.

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- <sup>146</sup> Author's interview with V.P. Hirubalan, Director of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Singapore, 18 September 1996.
- <sup>147</sup> Author's interview with Peter Chong in Singapore, 17 September 1996, and with Dr. Kwa Chong Guan in Singapore, 16 September 1996.
- <sup>148</sup> Some government officials were more reluctant to identify Chinas as the primary threat. Colonel Yap Ong Heng, Director of Policy, Ministry of Defense, only discussed regional instability as a problem for Singapore; he did not specifically mention China as a threat. Author's interview with Colonel Yap in Singapore, 17 September 1996.
- <sup>149</sup> Author's interviews with Peter Chong on 16 September 1996 and with Colonel Yap Ong Heng on 17 September 1996, both in Singapore.
- <sup>150</sup> Author's interview with Dr. Kwa Chong Guan in Singapore, 16 September 1996.
- <sup>151</sup> Author's interview with Ambassador S.R. Nathan, Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Singapore, 18 September 1996.
- <sup>152</sup> The Stanford Report, p. 63.
- <sup>153</sup> Author's interview with Colonel Yap Ong Heng in Singapore, 17 September 1996.
- <sup>154</sup> Author's interview with Colonel Yap Ong Heng in Singapore, 17 September 1996.
- <sup>155</sup> Author's interview with Dr. Derek da Cunha, Senior Fellow, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 18 September 1996.
- <sup>156</sup> Author's interview with V. P. Hirubalan in Singapore, 18 September 1996. The information in this paragraph and the one which follows came from this interview.
- <sup>157</sup> Author's interview with Colonel Jap Ong Heng in Singapore, 17 September 1996.
- <sup>158</sup> FBIS-EAS, 8 November 1989, p. 28.
- <sup>159</sup> International Herald Tribune, 14 November 1990, p. 1.
- <sup>160</sup> International Herald Tribune, 6 January 1991, p. 3.
- <sup>161</sup> Opinion piece by George Yong-Boon Yeo, International Herald Tribune, 28 January 1992, p. 4.
- <sup>162</sup> International Herald Tribune, 17 February 1992, p. 6.
- <sup>163</sup> International Herald Tribune, 10 December 1992, p. 8.
- <sup>164</sup> FBIS-EAS, 24 August 1989, p. 37. The Defense Minister at this time was Ahmad Rithauddeen.
- <sup>165</sup> FBIS-EAS, 29 August 1989, pp. 45-46. The official was Abdullah Badawi who later became Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- <sup>166</sup> FBIS-EAS, 17 July 1990, p. 28. The Deputy Prime Minister at this time was Ghafar Baba.
- <sup>167</sup> Author's interview with Colonel Robert Hammond, Commander of the 497th Combat Training Squadron in Singapore, 17 September 1996.
- <sup>168</sup> Author's interview with Colonel Steve McClain, U.S. Air Attaché, U.S. Embassy, Singapore, 16 September 1996.
- <sup>169</sup> Author's interview with Dr. Kwa Chong Guan in Singapore, 16 September 1996.
- <sup>170</sup> Author's interview with Colonel Steve McClain in Singapore, 16 September 1996.
- <sup>171</sup> Author's interview with V.P. Hirubalan in Singapore, 18 September 1996.
- <sup>172</sup> This point was made very effectively in interviews with the author by Piter Chong and Colonel Yap Ong Heng in Singapore on 17 September 1996.
- <sup>173</sup> Author's interview with Ambassador S.R. Nathan in Singapore, 18 September 1996.
- <sup>174</sup> Author's interview with Derek da Cunha in Singapore, 18 September 1996.



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<sup>175</sup> Author's interview with Emil Skodon, U.S. Embassy, Singapore, 16 September 1996. He made the point that Singapore has been able to compartmentalize its relationship with the U.S. by keeping military and economic ties separate from some sensitive political issues such as human rights policies.

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